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ABSTRACT

Designed to improve the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature, a 2-year collaborative study involved 20 teachers, 2 university-based researchers, and approximately 300 elementary school students in the Lansing, Michigan, area. The study examined aspects of the teachers' understanding of the theory and their practices pertaining to some crucial issues that affect this approach to literature. The issues examined included: the nature of literature and of critical thinking, critical aesthetic response to literature, and assessment procedures). Major objectives of the study were: (1) to help students become acquainted with all types of literature; (2) to create an environment in which literature is valued and enjoyed for the aesthetic experience it offers; and (3) to create an environment in which literature is valued and enjoyed for the varied and valid uses one can make of it. While all of the teachers taught some aspect of critical aesthetic response to literature, individual teachers chose different kinds of literature and encouraged different aspects of response. Results indicated that: (1) through the study and implementation of questioning techniques and through the activities they chose, the students learned to verbalize more precisely their responses to literature; and (2) critical aesthetic development consists of a very gradual acquisition of insights about the aesthetic aspects of a literary selection. The study concluded that elementary school students, even those in kindergarten and first grade, are quite capable of learning how to respond critically aesthetically to literature. (Six tables of data are included; 21 professional references and a 70-item children's literature bibliography are attached.) (RS)

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TEACHING AND LEARNING CRITICAL AESTHETIC RESPONSE TO LITERATURE: AN INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT STUDY IN GRADES K-5

Patricia J. Cianciolo and
Barbara A. Quirk

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College of Education

Michigan State University

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Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects

The **Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects** was awarded to Michigan State University in 1987 after a nationwide competition. Funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, the Elementary Subjects Center is a major project housed in the Institute for Research on Teaching (IRT). The program focuses on conceptual understanding, higher order thinking, and problem solving in elementary school teaching of mathematics, science, social studies, literature, and the arts. Center researchers are identifying exemplary curriculum, instruction, and evaluation practices in the teaching of these school subjects; studying these practices to build new hypotheses about how the effectiveness of elementary schools can be improved; testing these hypotheses through school-based research; and making specific recommendations for the improvement of school policies, instructional materials, assessment procedures, and teaching practices. Research questions include, What content should be taught when teaching these subjects for understanding and use of knowledge? How do teachers concentrate their teaching to use their limited resources best? and In what ways is good teaching subject matter-specific?

The work is designed to unfold in three phases, beginning with literature review and interview studies designed to elicit and synthesize the points of view of various stakeholders (representatives of the underlying academic disciplines, intellectual leaders and organizations concerned with curriculum and instruction in school subjects, classroom teachers, state- and district-level policymakers) concerning ideal curriculum, instruction, and evaluation practices in these five content areas at the elementary level. Phase II involves interview and observation methods designed to describe current practice, and in particular, best practice as observed in the classrooms of teachers believed to be outstanding. Phase II also involves analysis of curricula (both widely used curriculum series and distinctive curricula developed with special emphasis on conceptual understanding and higher order applications), as another approach to gathering information about current practices. In Phase III, models of ideal practice will be developed, based on what has been learned and synthesized from the first two phases, and will be tested through classroom intervention studies.

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Abstract

In this paper the authors report on a two year collaborative study involving 20 teachers, two university-based researchers, and approximately 300 elementary school students to improve the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature. It examined aspects of the teachers' understanding of the theory and their practices pertaining to some crucial issues that affect this approach to literature. The issues examined included the nature of literature (especially literature as an art), the nature of critical thinking, critical aesthetic response to literature, and assessment procedures. The major objectives of the study were (a) to help students become widely acquainted with all types of literature, (b) to create an environment in which literature is valued and enjoyed for the aesthetic experience it offers, and (c) to create an environment in which literature is valued and enjoyed for the varied and valid uses one can make of it. All of the teachers taught some aspect of critical aesthetic response to literature, but individual teachers chose different kinds of literature and encouraged different aspects of response.

The very heart of this approach to literature was the teachers' ability to design questions which elicit critical aesthetic response. Through the study and implementation of questioning techniques and through the activities they chose, the students learned to verbalize more precisely their responses to literature. The data indicated that critical aesthetic development consists of a very gradual acquisition of insights about the aesthetic aspects of a literary selection. It has become quite evident that elementary school students, even those in kindergarten and first grade, are quite capable of learning how to respond critically aesthetically to literature.

TEACHING AND LEARNING CRITICAL AESTHETIC RESPONSE TO LITERATURE: AN INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT STUDY IN GRADES K-5

Patricia J. Cianciolo and Barbara A. Quirk[1]

The research reported in this paper pertains to collaborative undertakings by an elementary school faculty and two university-based researchers to improve the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature in kindergarten through grade five. All of the elementary school faculty except one special education teacher and approximately 300 students participated in this study, which spanned two academic years (September 1990 through May 1992). A total of 20 teachers participated over the two-year span: In 1990-1991 there were 13 full time teachers, 1 part-time reading specialist, 1 instructional aide, and 2 graduate assistants; In 1991-1992 there were 12 full-time teachers, 1 part-time librarian, 1 part-time reading specialist, 1 instructional aide, and 2 graduate assistants. The extent of the commitment to each aspect of this study actually made by individuals within this faculty varied considerably throughout these two years.

In late Spring 1990, the director of this project was invited to meet with the faculty of Blaine Elementary School[2] to discuss the possibility of initiating this collaborative study on the teaching and learning of literature. During the subsequent meetings the faculty shared their interests in and needs for initiating this kind of study, and learned more about the director's interests in and needs for initiating this study. A decision was

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[1]Patricia J. Cianciolo, professor of teacher education, is a senior researcher with the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects. Barbara Quirk, doctoral student in teacher education, is a research assistant with the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects.

[2]We have used pseudonyms for the name of the school at which the study took place and the names of the students.

made to begin this study in the Fall of 1990. At that point, the goals, objectives and procedures would be collaboratively developed.

School Description

Blaine Elementary School, a 27-year-old urban elementary school, is one of 33 elementary schools in the school district in the Lansing, Michigan, area. Blaine is a K-5 school with 11 regular classroom teachers, 2 special education teachers, a part-time librarian, a part-time reading specialist, and other appropriate support personnel (e.g., music teacher, art teacher, physical education teacher) available on a regular, but intermittent basis, and approximately 300 students who live in the surrounding racially and economically diverse neighborhood. Within the last decade there has been a transition in student body from 20% to 48% in the minority population of the school. Approximately 52% of the students are Caucasian and 48% are minority. While African-American students make up the majority of the minority population (38%), a small percentage of students are Hispanic (8%), Asian/Pacific (1%), and Native American (1%). The socioeconomic status of the community also changed from middle and upper middle class to lower middle class. Most of the faculty have worked together for 15-20 years, with a long history of team- teaching.

Michigan State University collaboration extends over the entire history of Blaine, with Professional Development School involvement since 1989.

> A Professional Development School is
> an elementary, middle, or high school that works in partnership with a university to develop and demonstrate
> fine learning programs for diverse students, *and* practical, thought-provoking preparation for novice teachers, *and*
> New understandings and professional responsibilities for experienced educators, *and*
> research projects that add to all educators' knowledge about how to make schools more productive.
>
> A Professional Development School [is] a center of responsible innovative where new programs and technologies can be tried out and evaluated (The Holmes Group, n.d., 1-2).

Since 1989 Blaine faculty as a body has been exploring new organizational arrangements that support collaborative leadership, flexible distribution of time and resources, and new professional roles and partnership. In order to provide reallocated time for a busy faculty, a new position called a co-teacher was created in Fall of 1990. There were two co-teacher positions filled by Michigan State University graduate students during each year of this study. The co-teachers worked 30 hours per week providing release time so that teachers could further their research and inquiry about teaching and learning.

The library in this school consists of a seriously inadequate collection and is staffed by a professional librarian only two days a week. More specifically this library consists of an aging, outdated collection that is much too small for the number of students enrolled in the school and for demand created by the teaching practices (e.g., literature-based whole language approach to teaching literacy and multiple resource unit approach to teaching social studies) which a number of the faculty have already implemented and have said they would like to carry out more extensively. Accessibility to single and multiple copies of many of the most basic older titles and most of the current books is a serious problem. For years only a minuscule number of books were added to this collection. The maximum allotted annually in the school's budget for the purchase of library books (be they new books or replacement of books lost, stolen, or damaged beyond repair) is $400.00. This problem has been alleviated slightly during the duration of this study, for during each of these two years the Michigan Partnership for a New Education through its Professional Development Schools project has contributed

approximately $1000.00 for the purchase of books.[3] Thus, we have added about 350 single and multiple copies of books to the school library. These titles were identified collaboratively by the faculty and the university-based researchers participating in this study.

The librarian is assigned to this school two days each week; she services another school in the district two days a week; on the fifth day she works in the media center in the district's administrative building. (She did not participate in this research during the first year because of poor health, and most of the library activities for which she assumes responsibility are quite independent of the study. However, she is more than willing to assist any of the teachers and students who request her help in gathering specific materials needed for the units or projects related to the study.) To make certain that the children at least have access to the existing collection throughout the entire week, we have arranged to have it staffed by two people who are not professionally trained librarians, but are certified teachers. One is a reading specialist who is assigned to the school two-and-a-half days each week. The other is a co-teacher who is hired to teach and perform professional tasks throughout the building when and where they are needed. Each of these teachers works in the library ten hours each week, on the days the librarian is not in the building.

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[3]The Michigan Partnership for New Education is a nonprofit corporation established in 1990 as a collaboration among Michigan business, education and government to modernize teaching a learning for a changing world. The purpose of the Partnership is to establish innovation sites (professional development schools and their neighborhoods) where new forms of learning are developed, tested and demonstrated, and to carry the fresh knowledge about teaching and learning to educators across the state.

Personal History of Participating Faculty

Teacher 1, who is presently teaching kindergarten, has been at Blaine for 16 years. She began teaching second grade mid-year during the 1960-1961 school year and continued teaching at this grade for one more year. She has also taught grade one for one year and grade three for three years. While her children were young she taught kindergarten half-time for thirteen years. Teacher 1 graduated from Michigan State University with a bachelor's degree with a major in child development and early childhood education. She recalled that both of her parents were avid readers and she had many books in her home, most of which she still has in her possession. She also remembered that her mother took her to the library a lot and that she had a library card. She said "I don't remember literature as such in school, [but] I remember a fifth-grade teacher who read to us a lot."

Teacher 2, who is a grade-one teacher, has been at Blaine her entire teaching career, 24 years. During this time her primary assignment has always been first grade, however, she has also taught social studies, music and math in various team situations. Teacher 2's undergraduate degree is from Central Michigan University. She completed three minors: math, music, and geography, and a major in social science. Her continuing education for her permanent teaching certificate was completed at Michigan State University with an emphasis on developing math curriculum. Teacher 2 stated that when she was in elementary school she does not

> remember the teachers reading to us a lot.... We didn't have a library in our school, so the only exposure we had to a library was the book mobile that came to school. Even that experience was limited because all we did was go out to the book mobile, get a book and come back in.... I look back now and [compare that] with what I have done in my classroom and the experiences that I've shared with my students. I really feel that I missed something.

Though Teacher 2 recalls having books in her home, she does not remember either of her parents reading to her.

Teacher 3, who is also a grade-one teacher, began teaching at Blaine 20 years ago, and has never taught at any other school. She taught second grade for one year, and a combination first- and second-grade class for one year. The rest of the time she has taught at grade-one level. Teacher 3 earned her undergraduate degree at Jackson State University in Mississippi with a major in elementary education. She received her master of arts degree in reading instruction at Michigan State University. Teacher 3 said that she did not have much exposure to literature in her early childhood years. In fact, she did not have a library in her elementary school nor was she allowed to use the city public library because she lived in the country. "The only library I had was when I was in junior high school.... I always enjoyed someone reading to me. I never enjoyed reading to someone.... That's not my thing to read. I love to be read to."

Teacher 4, who is a certified teacher, has taught in grade one at Blaine as an instructional aide for 23 years because of family commitments. Approximately four years ago she was assigned to teaching reading and math to small groups of compensatory education children (Article III) for-one-and-a half hours each day in addition to her first-grade assignment. Teacher 4's undergraduate major, from Wheaton College, a Christian college in Illinois, was elementary education. Her continuing certification credit was earned at Michigan State University. Teacher 4 remembers a sixth-grade teacher reading a lot of poetry, especially poems by James Whitcomb Riley. In seventh grade she worked in the school library. "So I read all the Laura Ingalls Wilder books. Then I read practically every book in that little library." She does not recall having many books or magazines in her home. She said, "I don't know

if my mother ever picked up a book other than the Bible to read. My dad only read his plumbing books." Because Teacher 4 lived in the country, the only library she had access to was the one in the school.

Teacher 5 is presently teaching in grade two, but during her 26 years of teaching her assignments have varied. She began teaching grade three in 1966 in an upper class suburban community in central Michigan. After a one-year maternity leave, she elected to move to a larger urban school district where she has remained. Her first assignment in this district was a combination third- and fourth-grade in an inner city school; she taught in that situation for four-and-a-half years. Following another one-year maternity leave she was assigned to a different elementary school where she stayed for one year. In 1973 she transferred to Blaine where she has had varied assignments. For a few years she had released time several days a month to work as a puppeteer in the "Kids on the Block" program. After this experience, she developed and directed a general education resource room for low-achieving students who did not qualify for special education; she did this for three years. Following this experience she taught in a regular classroom. She was then given a new assignment which lasted for two-and-a-half years: half-time in the classroom and half-time as language arts consultant, working with the district writing program. For the last three years she has been teaching grade two at Blaine. Teacher 5 has her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Michigan State University. She chose not to follow a master's degree program; instead she took graduate courses which allowed her to focus on her particular interests and needs. As a child, Teacher 5 had a lot of books and magazines in her home that she could read. In school, however,

> the teacher had a bunch of books in her room but we never could choose them. I remember one time she was handing out books for kids to read. She handed me some sick old book because I was a good reader, but I didn't give a care about that book. I hated that book.

> To this day I can't remember what it was ... and I hated not being able to choose what I wanted to read.

She didn't remember going to the public library.

During the course of this two-year study, Teacher 6 stayed with the same group of children through grades two and three. She was originally certified to teach French on the secondary level which she did for one year in Florida. She was out of teaching for approximately 10 years. Then she served as an instructional aide for several years in a learning center. She returned to full-time classroom teaching in 1984 at Blaine in grade four. After one year she moved to grade two. Teacher 6 graduated with a bachelor of science degree with a major in French and political science. Several years later she went back to school to become certified in elementary education. Teacher 6 attended a one-room school (grades 1-8) in rural Wisconsin and then went to high school in town. She said

> I can never remember my teachers reading out loud to me.... We had a library in our school but it was just bricks and board shelves in the back of the room. Every year we would get a new box of books and that was a high point of the year for me. Every year I read all of the books in our library.

Teacher 6 recalled going to the library every Saturday after her piano lessons and would get "a stack of books. My mom always read to us at night and we had books all over our house. It was a very literate home."

Teacher 7 has taught in this school district for 22 years; 21 at Blaine. Most of the time she has taught grade three except during the years the school was involved in differentiated staffing and team teaching when she taught grades two, three, and four. During the two years of this study, she taught grade three. Teacher 7 has a bachelor of science degree with a major in home economics and a minor in elementary education. Teacher 7 has no memories of

literature being taught in her elementary classes, but there were always books in her home and she also went to the public library to get books.

Teacher 8 has taught for 23 years, 22 at Blaine; her primary assignment has been grade three; however, like Teacher 7, there were several years when the school was involved in differentiated staffing and team teaching she taught grades two, three, and four. During the two years of this study, she taught the first year in grade three and the second in grade two. Teacher 8's undergraduate degree was earned at Western Michigan University with a major in elementary education and minors in science, drama and social studies. She has a master of arts degree in classroom teaching from Michigan State University. Teacher 8 stated "I had a teacher [in grade four] who loved literature. She exposed us to a lot of things related to literature." Teacher 8 emphasized that, though she read books, she was not an avid reader.

Teacher 9 has taught for the past 24 years at Blaine. She has only taught in the upper grades. During the two years of this study she taught in grade four. Previously she taught in various team combinations: grade-five-and-six team, grade-four-and-five team, and a grade four-five-and-six team. In 1960 Teacher 9 earned a bachelor of sacred and applied music degree, in 1961 a bachelor of music education degree, and in 1963 a master of music education degree. She completed requirements for certification in elementary teaching in 1972 and a master of arts degree in administration and curriculum in 1974. Teacher 9 commented that in her elementary school each classroom had its own library, but each collection consisted of "very, very few books. I had read all of them by the end of September. My main exposure to literature was in my own home and in my grandmother's home. I was exposed to extremely good literature at a very young age."

Teacher 10's first teaching experience was in a one-room country school where she taught grades one through eight for one year. She then moved to a three-teacher school in western Michigan where she taught grades three and four for one year. Then the next year, she again changed school districts and taught one half year only when she stopped teaching for 12 years to raise her children. In 1968 she resumed her teaching career. She taught one year in a sixth-grade team-teaching situation in a rural community in central Michigan, and then moved to Blaine because all of the teachers were working in teams. Since she has been at Blaine, she has taught in various team combinations: for example, grade-four team, grade-four-five-and-six team, grade-four-and-five team, grade-three-four-and-five team. She then taught second grade for one year. For the last three years, including the two years of this study, she has taught grade four. Teacher 10 has a bachelor of arts degree from Western Michigan University where she majored in English and minored in math and science. She completed her course work for permanent certification at Michigan State University. Teacher 10 also went to a one-room rural school in western Michigan (grades K-8). She indicated that the only library books in her school were a "set of encyclopedias and a set of books that had some sort of stories in them. A book mobile came around once a month. I got most of my literature from the neighbor kids who would exchange books. I would lend them my books and they would lend me theirs. They may not always have been good books, but at least it was some books."

Teacher 11 began teaching in 1965 in a western Michigan urban school district where she taught grade six for three years. Then she taught grade six for two years in a rural community in central Michigan. After teaching grade six for half a year in a suburban school district, she moved to Blaine School where has taught for 21 years in various team combinations: for

example, grade-four team, grade-four-five-and-six team, grade-four-and-five-team, grade-three-four-and-five team. During the two years of our study she has taught grade five. Teacher 11 has a bachelor of arts degree in elementary education from Calvin College, Michigan. She took her continuing education courses at Michigan State University. Teacher 11 stated that there was no central library in her elementary school (grades K-8), only classroom libraries "which were very limited." She does remember that through grade six the teachers read books aloud "for pure enjoyment, but they never talked about the books." She recalled that her parents, mostly her father, read aloud to her every night. She does not remember having many books in her home, but once a week she and her sister walked to the library to get books.

Teacher 12 has taught in this school district for 22 and a half years. For 20 and a half years he taught in grades four, five and six in the same school. For the first 3 and one half years at that school he taught in a grade-four self-contained classroom. The remaining 17 years he taught grade five or six in a team teaching situation. Teacher 12's first year at Blaine coincided with the first year of this study. The fifth-grade team has also participated in an inclusion program during the two years of this study. Teacher 12 has a bachelor of arts degree with majors in math and science, and a minor in English. He has a master of arts degree in administration. Teacher 12 indicated that he attended grades K-3 in a one-room rural school which had a library lending program. He said "we used to get two boxes of books every two months. That was our entire library for kindergarten through grade eight. Each grade level probably had six or seven books from which to choose. We could keep them for one week." He moved to a different school where he attended grades four through eight. He said, "They had absolutely no

library in that school. So obviously they didn't push reading any library books. The next time I saw a library was in high school."

Teacher 13 has taught for 23 years. For the first 11 years she taught grades two or three. After taking time off to have a family, she returned to teaching as a half-time reading specialist. She has been at Blaine for the past 11 years. Her responsibilities for the past 2 years have included teaching remedial reading and teaching in the library program. Teacher 13 has a bachelor of arts with a major in elementary education and a master of arts in reading instruction from Michigan State University. Teacher 13 said that she cannot remember having teachers read literature aloud to the students. She attended two elementary schools neither of which had a library. She commented that occasionally her parents would buy books for her.

Teacher 14 has taught special education for 19 years. She taught in an urban setting in western Michigan from 1973 to 1976. In Fall 1976 she moved to Lansing and accepted a position at Blaine Elementary School where she currently teaches in a pull-out classroom with students from kindergarten through grade 5. Teacher 14 earned her bachelor of arts degree in elementary education with certification in social science, psychology, and learning disabilities from Grand Valley State University in 1973. She completed her post-bachelor credit in additional areas of special education at Michigan State University from 1977 to 1978.

The following six teachers participated in the project for one year:

Teacher 15 has taught in special education for 13 years in this school district. Her assignments have varied from preschool, emotionally impaired children to the grade-five inclusion[4] program during the first year of this

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[4]By inclusion we mean a classroom which consists of children who are legally identified as special education students do well as those who are not.

study, 1990-1991. She was unable to participate in the second year of this study because she was transferred to another school. Teacher 15 earned her bachelor of arts degree in special education for emotionally impaired and elementary education from Michigan State University in 1978. She earned a master of arts in learning disabilities with an emphasis in social education.

Teacher 16 began teaching in 1969 in an urban school district in eastern Michigan. Throughout her teaching she has lived in many different communities, primarily in Michigan, as a result she has had many different teaching assignments, for example, Title 1 math, Title 1 reading, grade-one classroom. During the first year of this study she was hired as a co-teacher and divided her time between the library and Chapter 1 reading. She did not participate in the second year of this study because she was hired as a full-time teacher by this school district. Teacher 16 earned her bachelor of arts degree in elementary education at Michigan State University in 1969. She completed 30 hours of graduate work at University of Chicago in early elementary education and reading but did not complete the degree. During the first year of this study she began taking graduate level courses in reading at Michigan State University. Teacher 16 recalls that books were very important during her childhood. Though there were not many books in her home, she has fond memories of her mother reading to her. She attended a one-room country school where she spent a lot of time reading. She began going into town to the public library when she was in grade two or three and remembers searching for and reading the entire collection of the Little House on the Prairie series by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Her primary past time as a child was reading.

Teacher 17 participated in the first year of this study; he was not working at Blaine during the second year. He taught for one year in Florida. When he returned to Lansing, Michigan he substitute taught for one semester

and then accepted a position as a co-teacher with the grades two and three teams. Teacher 17 earned a bachelor of arts in elementary education with minors in social science and science from Michigan State University in 1988. He is currently working on a master of arts in curriculum from Michigan State University.

Teacher 18 participated in the second year of this study. She graduated from Michigan State University with a bachelor of arts in elementary education in 1991. She accepted a position as a co-teacher with the grades four and five teams in Fall 1991.

Teacher 19 participated in the second year of this study. She earned a bachelor of arts in elementary education from Michigan State University in 1991. She accepted a position as a co-teacher with the grades two and three teams and in the library.

Teacher 20, the librarian at Blaine Elementary School, began teaching in this school district in 1959. She taught in the elementary classroom for seven years at which time she took a leave to have a family. While her children were young, she ran a nursery school. When she returned to the public school setting, she taught kindergarten for six years before moving to a position as a librarian. She currently serves as librarian in two elementary schools. Teacher 20 earned a bachelor of arts degree with a major in English in 1959, and her master of arts degree in classroom teaching with an emphasis on literature in 1962. In the early 1980s she took additional credits in both library science and remedial reading.

Theoretical Background

Why literature? A significant body of research substantiates some important points about the teaching of literature. The development of an interest in and enjoyment of reading is fostered through daily opportunities

to experience literature in pleasurable and active ways, for example, reader's theatre, response journals, and book discussions in which students share their responses to the literary selections. Literature extends and enriches background knowledge. There is a correlation between exposure to literature, a knowledge of how language works, and development of sophisticated language structures.

What does literature as art mean? Webster defines art as the conscious use of skill and creative imagination in the production (or) creation of aesthetic objects. Literature is an art. So, literary art is the product of the conscious use of skill and creative imagination when creating a novel, a picture book, drama, or literary biography.

What is critical aesthetic response to literature? Critical aesthetic response to literature as art consists of the awareness and appreciation of cognitive and affective experiences evoked by the elements of a story (poem, drama, literary biography), the ability to critically evaluate literary works of art according to criteria and characteristics defined over time and by the traditions of a specific culture, as well as the ability to recognize the beautiful in the selections and to prefer the beautiful in it in terms of individual taste.

When teaching students to engage in critical thinking about literature, we are teaching them to respond critically aesthetically to literature. When we are teaching them to respond to literature in this manner, it is crucial to recognize the value and inevitability of both <u>cognitive</u> and <u>affective</u> responses to literature. Both are inherent in critical thinking and aesthetic response and should be encouraged in any literature program, especially if we want to develop discriminating readers of literature and readers who will turn

to quality literature for lasting, memorable, and satisfying reading experiences.

Certain essential conditions must be acknowledged if a critical aesthetic response is to occur. One, the literary selection in-and-of itself is an object of art. Indeed, it is an independent and concrete object of art, with intrinsic characteristics, form, and structure. Two, aesthetic values do exist in literature and these characteristics or standards are determined by a society (a particular culture) over time, and should be used to determine the worth or the quality of the literary art piece. And, three, creativity is expressed by both the artist (author or books illustrator) and the appreciator (reader) of the story.

At the first reading of a literary selection, be it prose or poetry, fiction, literary biographies, or drama, children and adults tend to read first of all for the story, for what happens next. The same occurs when reading the informational articles or essays; the readers focus first on the content (facts and ideas) contained in the selections. In the case of reading literary selections, readers tend to react to the pace, mood, and the personalities and actions of the characters, before becoming aware of the author's theme(s) or argument, tone or style, before that can concentrate on being analytical and evaluative in their reading. It is at the second reading, or at least after they have read a good portion of a selection, know the story and experienced the impact of the interrelationship of the literary elements cited above, that they can engage in critical thinking and evaluate it as literary art. The same principle applies when viewing a film or drama, for these, too, are forms of literary art.

Keep in mind that the background of experiences the readers have had with literature tends to influence how they compare one story with another and how

they compare and contrast new works by an author with his/her older works. Add to this the fact that readers need knowledge about literature in and of itself: elements of fiction, the characteristics and structure of the various literary genre, plus some knowledge and guidance about how to use techniques in critical thinking. During the second reading or during their reflecting time on what was read previously, they can investigate why and what they liked or disliked about a particular book, be asked to try to define the qualities about the writing and/or illustrations that either took them into the story or turned them away from it. It is after they have read a selection that they may ask questions which foster the development of their ability to engage in critical aesthetic response to the reading they have done, that students should be encouraged to consider (in childlike, not childish terms) aspects of character drawing, style, tone, voice, the point or theme of the story, the effectiveness of the illustrations in an illustrated book or picture book and so on.

A number of research studies concerning children's response to literature clearly demonstrate that the recognition of the cognitive element does not deny the importance of the emotional side of the aesthetic experience. Rather it denies the value of distinction. Our cognition and our emotions are intrinsically related to aesthetic responses. The ways we understand a story (or a painting, a piece of sculpture, or a musical selection) influence our feelings and our feelings guide our understanding of it. To a large extent, cognition gives shape to emotions and for this reason is a justified focus for analyzing and critiquing a literary work of art (Bogdan, 1986; Fox & Hammond, 1980; Parsons, 1989).

What are some of the necessary conditions to effect change in teaching? In order for schools to improve, the people involved must create the following

conditions: (1) a vision, (2) a community of learners consisting of both teachers and students, and (3) a willingness to take risks with the assurance of support from significant others (Barth, 1990). Therefore, all of the participants collaboratively developed the overall objectives and scope of the study. They worked together in grade-level teams to designate the aspects of literature, methods, and specific literary selections they might use. Considerable effort was made by all concerned to protect and respect the individuality of each teacher and at the same time encourage the processes of collegial exchange (Little, 1992).

Procedures and Methodology

Fourteen out of 16 full- and part-time faculty employed at Blaine School in 1989-1990 voiced a number of reasons for their interest in pursuing this study. One, they were committed to extensive use of literature in the classroom. Two, they wanted their students to develop the habit of reading for different purposes. Three, they wanted to improve their teaching of literature. Four, they wanted to investigate approaches to teaching critical response to literature. In consultation with the university researchers who ultimately coordinated this collaborative study, it was decided that the focus of the study would be critical aesthetic response to literature because that approach to literature encompasses the tenets cited above. An explanation of the focus of this study is presented below.

All of the educators who participated in this study examined aspects of the theory and practice pertaining to some crucial issues that affect this approach to literature. The issues examined included the nature of literature (especially literature as an art), the content of an ideal elementary literature program, the nature of critical thinking, response to literature (especially critical aesthetic response to literature), and assessment procedures.

Participants (teachers and university-based researchers) met in study seminars twice each month during the first year of this study and once a month during the second year. The purposes of these study seminar sessions were (1) to identify the goals and objectives of this study, (2) to articulate concerns about the crucial issues of theory and practice in the study of the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature, (3) to identify types of questions which would foster this kind of response to literature, and (4) to become familiar with current quality literature for children. A significant number of sessions were devoted to the development of questions which would foster cognitive and affective responses to literature such as those developed by Parsons (1986, 1989) and Probst (1991). Individual and small groups of teachers reported experiences, problems, concerns, challenges, and successes they and their students had during the course of the study. Periodical assessments of the progress participants were making toward meeting expressed needs and realizing designated objectives also occurred during study seminar sessions.

To document the progress and change in knowledge and understanding about literature as an art, especially the critical aesthetic response to literature, data were obtained from a number of different sources. Interviews with each teacher and selected students identified by the teachers (six students from each grade level chosen on the basis of interest in reading literature--two high, two middle, and two low) were conducted and tape recorded at the beginning and end of each school year. The two university-based researchers working with this study (the coordinator and her research assistant) frequently conferred with individual and/or small groups of teachers prior to and following the classroom observations. During these conferences, we discussed concerns or problems, identified optional instructional approaches and

techniques, and identified instructional materials which might help the teachers to improve in their teaching of literature and students to advance further in learning how to respond critically aesthetically to literature. Moreover, teachers used this occasion to report their assessments of students' progress.

The university-based researchers periodically observed and videotaped literature lessons. Each teacher identified the date and time as well as the focus of each lesson that was observed. Students' responses to the lessons were also videotaped, and if written work was a part of the lesson, it was collected. The teachers were asked to preview privately these video recordings of each of their lessons, to select portions of the tapes they wished to share with the university-based researchers. These portions of the videotapes were then used during individual conferences to discuss specific strengths and problems of a particular lesson as objectively and constructively as possible. During each school year, teachers kept a running record of the literary selections they and their students read. These entries which were recorded on the Literary Genre Chart (see Table 1) indicate the following: title, genre, literature connection, (uses) method of the presentation.

Content analysis was done of interviews, students' work, videotaped lessons, and teacher-reported literature records which identify (1) the total number of books read each year, (2) the variety of genre used throughout each year, and (3) what, if any, particular curricular connections were made. Using the teachers' self-reported literature records we developed tables which were used to examine teacher changes, both their knowledge about literature and their approaches to literature.

Table 1

LITERARY GENRE CHART–AVERILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Year: Teacher: Level:	POETRY nursery rhymes, anthologies, poetic forms, themes	Literature as Literature	Curricular * Connection	Themes: Classroom	School	Teacher Favorite	Spontaneous Connection	CONCEPT Patterns, abc, 1,2,3, color, parts of speech	Literature as Literature	Curricular * Connection	Themes: Classroom	School	Teacher Favorite	Spontaneous Connection	MODERN FANTASY Other worlds, animals, science fiction	Literature as Literature	Curricular * Connection	Themes: Classroom	School	Teacher Favorite	Spontaneous Connection	HISTORICAL FICTION prehistoric, old world, new world, war	Literature as Literature	Curricular * Connection	Themes: Classroom	School	Teacher Favorite	Spontaneous Connection	BIOGRAPHY AUTO-BIOGRAPHY	Literature as Literature	Curricular * Connection	Themes: Classroom	School	Teacher Favorite	Spontaneous Connection
	FOLKLORE Fables, fairy tales, folktales, legends, myths, tall tales							CONTEMPORARY Becoming one's own person: family relationships, friendships, peer relationships, maturity, survival							REALISTIC FICTION Coping with problems of the human condition: handicaps, disabilities, drugs, health, aging							Living in a pluralistic society: racial, ethnic, religious, regional, and world culture diversity							INFORMATIONAL BOOKS						
	Book Title	Uses						Book Title	Uses																										
CODE																																		
CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS* RS: Reading skills W: Writing M: Mathematics SS: Social studies S: Science A: Arts C: Celebrations																																		
RA: Read aloud IR: Independent study																																		

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Data

Establishing Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives for this study were established collectively by all of the participants during the first three study seminars in Fall 1990. The goals identified were as follows:

1. To build a firm foundation for a lifelong habit of reading,
2. To create an appreciation and preference for quality literature, and
3. To enrich and extend the imagination through literature.

To accomplish these goals the following major objectives were identified:

1. To help elementary school pupils to become widely acquainted with all types of literature.
2. To create an environment in which literature is valued and enjoyed for the aesthetic experience it offers.
3. To create an environment in which literature is valued and enjoyed for the varied and valid uses one can make of it.
   a. To help students develop and apply specific criteria and procedures for analyzing and evaluating the literature they read.

      To develop an understanding of literary forms, techniques, and styles

      To demonstrate the unique artistry of individual authors and illustrators.

      To foster the development of individualized literary taste and preference.

   b. To develop an awareness of the relationship between literature and other subject areas.

Periodically the teachers were asked to identify which of these goals they chose to emphasize in their classrooms. The following statements are representative of the priorities identified.

At the end of the first year of this study (Spring 1991) Teacher 5, who teaches grade two, commented,

> I want children first and foremost to enjoy a variety of literature, and I'd like them to recognize what makes literature good. I'd like them to appreciate the work the author and the illustrator do and how they apply their art. I'd definitely like children to be aware of what they like, what their favorite books are and why. They should be able to think about it and justify why it's their favorite so they're not just making statements off the top of their head. I guess I want them to become critical readers of literature, but not so critical that they stop enjoying it.

Teacher 8 stated that she wanted her grade-three students to know that reading a story is a way of looking at the world in different ways, seeing different places, learning about different problems and how the characters solve them.

> I think it's important to let them bring their own feelings and their own histories to the stories they read. That it's okay to feel differently about a story than their classmates or me. The story makes us feel differently because we have different histories, experiences, feelings, and problems.

At the same time in this study, Teacher 7 said, "I want my students to want to read, to choose to do so on their own and enjoy it." In addition, she stated she wanted her grade-three students to develop an awareness that there are ways to choose good literature and that there is criteria which should be used to make that evaluation. Furthermore, she wanted her students to know that reading is not associated only with school, that there is a variety of literature out there which they can read for various purposes.

At the end of the second year of this study (Spring 1992) Teacher 1 expressed the need for her kindergarten students to appreciate that illustrations are part of the story and recognize how they are tied to the text. She said that she wanted them to understand that

> the artist didn't just paint a picture because he liked to paint that kind of thing. It's tied to what the author is saying. I also want them to understand that the words the author used paint a picture, and that the author uses certain words so we [the readers] could see what he is talking about.

At the same point in this study, Teacher 12 indicated that his

> major goals probably were to just enjoy reading. Another one, at the beginning of the year, was for the students to identify what [the

characteristics of] good literature are and they already knew that [from the previous years]. The third thing was to look at the writing styles of different authors. How did they get their ideas and feelings across.

Establishing Questioning Techniques

Aside from the teacher's knowledge about literature, the very heart of this approach to literature seems to be the ability to design questions which elicit critical aesthetic response and also encourage the children to continue to advance developmentally in this kind of response to literature. In fact, it seems to be our biggest challenge thus far. We found that throughout the two years of our study, we had to work repeatedly on the issues of questioning. We focused on such concerns as (1) What questions do we ask about literature so that the students understand that it is a specific art form ("an object") which is perceived as something fairly tangible? In other words, what questions do we ask so they understand that as an art form literature consists of specific qualities which cause it to be the particular work of art it is and that these qualities are perceptible to the reader? (Cianciolo, 1982; Ingarden, 1973a, 1974b; Miller, 1980) (2) Who should ask what of whom about their response to literature? and (3) How can we ask these and other questions and provide activities which enable the children to respond to these questions without destroying their enthusiasm and uninhibited delight that comes with satisfying and enjoyable literary experiences?

We continue to grapple with these issues and, although we have made considerable progress, we have a long way to go. Our experiences and deliberations at this point in our study have led us to conclude the following: (1) The approach to questioning should be based upon open-ended questions which focus the reader's attention into the selection not out of it, (2) The questions which the teacher poses should be designed to move the learners along

to more sophisticated ways of viewing and responding to literary works, and (3) Students should be encouraged to ask themselves questions about the whys and hows of literature and their responses to it. The overriding importance of questioning is supported by Teacher 10's statement made at the end of the first year of the study, "I think it's hard to ask the questions to get students to do the critical thinking. That's the hardest thing. I don't know If I'm asking the right questions. So often it's the surface kind of thing. I think we need to get our questioning better."

There seems to be a direct correlation between the syntax or level of thinking inherent in teachers' questions and the syntax or level of thinking evidenced in the students' responses. Seldom, if ever, is one able to offer critical thinking-type questions without careful thought and planning. Likewise, seldom, if ever, can one respond to critical thinking-level questions without careful thought.

The syntactical structure of questions one asks and the statements one makes about literature via the content of the questions can model critical aesthetic response to literature. The questions one poses can also motivate students to acquire new/more information or attitudes about literature, to compare and contrast this new information and attitudes about literature and their responses to it with what they already know or value. Questions can also help students to draw meaningful relationships and to apply or transfer those relationships when evaluating (judging) the quality of literary selections they are rereading or are reflecting on.

The students should be helped to understand that teachers ask questions about the students' responses to literature to provide a means by which they can learn how to engage in critical aesthetic response to literature. There are multiple goals for posing questions which call for this kind of higher

order thinking. Students should understand that the responsibility for critical aesthetic response to literature is theirs, that they will ask these kinds of questions of themselves when they are reading literature. That it is not only common, but desirable for persons to respond differently to literature. That one usually needs to take time to realize what one's response to a literary selection was and why it was as it was. That one's response to literature can be changed with additional information about literature and experience with it. In a full faculty seminar in April 1991, Teacher 9 commented that one result from her approach to teaching literature was that

> the hierarchy of the questions [her grade-four students] were asking is more sophisticated, They use more of what the author has expressed, like the language the author used to clues he used when they are talking about something in the story instead of just guessing or expressing an unsupported opinion.

By Spring 1992 Teacher 2 reported that some of her grade-one students had reached this stage.

> I had some children this year who wanted to read stories to the other children and it got so they wanted to ask questions to the group. It wasn't necessarily the type of questioning that I was doing, but at least they were making the step to want to ask questions about the book. They would finish and I'd say "Okay it's someone else's turn." Several of the children would say "But Mrs. _____ I want to ask them [the other students] some questions."

One of the most challenging facets of effective questioning is to be able to follow-up spontaneously the students' responses to the higher order thinking questions teachers prepared with others which also elicit critical thinking. This is especially true if one discusses aspects about the selection which the teacher and the students do not already know from their reading. The discussion should further the students' understanding of the selection and their response to it.

Whenever possible the literature experience should not be interrupted because it destroys the gestalt. This is especially true if it is a short

selection (e.g., a picture book, a poem, a short story, or a chapter of a novel). When questions are asked at the end of each chapter in a novel, these questions should not call for such elaborate responses that the intensity of involvement that has built up as the story advances is lessened or destroyed. The questions one asks should be based on the students' responses to the selections, and their explanation of or justification for their interpretations and responses to the reading and should not be asked prior to the students' first encounter with the story or while reading it to them. In each case, each story should be read, first and foremost, for the pleasure it has the potential to offer to each student and for the impact of the gestalt on the reader's involvement and identification with the literary elements.

Many of the teachers had difficulty implementing this strategy. The following comments exemplify many of the teachers' thoughts in the spring of the second year of this study. Teacher 2 said,

> One of the things that [the director of the study] really insisted on, which was very hard for me, is to sit down and read through the whole story and I had never done that. In the past, we would come to something and a discussion would start up and we would stop and talk about it. So it was really hard for me to read through the whole selection, but as the year went on that became easier and I noticed the kids liked it better when the reading was not interrupted.

At a full faculty seminar in April 1991 several teachers discussed their concerns about this issue.

> Teacher 2: For first graders it is very hard to read the [complete] story because they will stop and discuss it. I could see older children might be able to, but first graders want to discuss it.
>
> Teacher 3: If they start talking about a picture, how do you stop that? You can't say you can't talk about that now.
>
> Pat C.: No, but you don't follow up on it. Their comments mean that they are totally in the story. Let them make their comments but you're just listening to their reactions and then you pull them back without letting them get off base. You just start reading the story again. I know that isn't easy. How much elaboration do you think you could give without disrupting the story?

Teacher 6: That's a hard question. I think the trouble is we don't think we're disrupting the story. We think we're adding to it. Truly, I don't think of it as interrupting the story at all.

Teacher 5: I don't see that I am either.

Teacher 1: What about when you're reading to preschool children and they want to talk about it? Would you respond to them either?

Pat C: Not very much. The idea is to keep them engrossed in the story. You should not talk about it unless there is a chapter or an end of an episode break. If it's one story, it is not to be interrupted because it's important to create a gestalt. Stories are designed to build up involvement and tension around the character's problem and then taper off quickly.

Teacher 6: It will take time for me personally to change after stopping during the story for 17 or 18 years.

Teacher 14: It's like watching a movie on TV and being interrupted by commercials. Sometimes that is irritating. Now that we have the choice with VCR's and HBO of watching movies that are uninterrupted, they're much better. They're really much better. Even though I have the same problem [wanting to stop to talk about the book] that's how I've been trying to think of it. I know that when I can watch a movie uninterrupted I enjoy it much more than one that's chopped up with 42 commercials during it. It does make a difference.

Teacher 9: I think what we're doing is judging our audience, our kids. We're making the judgement that they aren't understanding a portion of the story.

Teacher 16: I think so too. I find it's much easier when I'm in the library to read the entire story because my objective is to expose them to literature. When I'm acting as a reading teacher then my objective is a little different [and I think] that's part of our problem.

Pat C: You are not a reading teacher in the traditional sense of the word when you are using this approach. You are improving reading skills all the way along the line, but in a different way.

Barb Q.: It's just the way you're thinking about what you are doing.

Aesthetic development consists of the gradual acquisition of insights about the aesthetic aspects of a literary selection or about the pictures that illustrate the story. These insights are gained through an education in which one often encounters literature as art and is expected to think about

literature seriously. Aesthetic development seldom occurs to any marked extent when literature is viewed primarily as a time-filler and/or as a vehicle for learning skills or facts in some subject such as history, reading, science, and health.

In our attempt to pose the kinds of questions that would elicit critical aesthetic response to literature by children, we studied Michael Parsons's five developmental stages of critical aesthetic response to visual art (Parsons, 1989) and translated them to critical aesthetic response to literature. These stages served as a schematic outline and the basis for this research project on the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature. Each stage is a loosely knit structure in which a number of ideas are shaped by a dominant insight about literature as art. The reader's response to literature, therefore, is shaped by the dominate insight characteristic of the particular developmental stage at which the reader happens to be. As the reader progresses from one stage to the next, he/she understands the aesthetics of literature more adequately than in the previous stage. He/she acquires new insight about the aesthetics of literature and uses that insight to interpret the interrelationships of text (and text and pictures in the case of picture books) more completely than before. Readers must go through this developmental process for each genre. For example a reader who responds on the level of Stage Four when reading modern realistic fiction might respond on Stage Two when reading science fiction.

All of the participants in the study worked together in both whole group and small groups to formulate questions that would help to foster critical aesthetic response to literature at each developmental stage. During this process everyone grappled with understanding the concepts inherent in each developmental stage of response. This seemed to provide a forum for

furthering teachers own understanding of critical aesthetic response to literature. In Spring 1991, Teacher 8 emphasized that she learned the most about the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature when working with a small group of teachers to develop the questions. "That really clarified more for me than anything else what I should have been doing way back at the beginning. I wish I knew then what I know now. I'm ready for next year and with a much clearer idea of what I want to do."

Our adaptation of Parsons's five developmental stages of critical aesthetic response to literature and the questions we developed are presented briefly below.

> STAGE ONE: Stage One can be thought of as a kind of theoretical zero point. Although readers have immense social potential they have not become a member of the literary society. Readers are unable to take the perspective of others and are really unaware of the difference between themselves and others. Readers are not clear that others do not see and feel what they think, see, and feel because they have not distinguished between their points of view and others' points of view. In short, each reader is aware of only one point of view, the one from which everything appears to him/her. Aesthetically, literature is a means (vehicle) to pleasant experiences. Liking a story is identical with judging it. There are no questions about objectivity.
>
> Questions at Stage One--
>
> What did (didn't) you like about this story? Why?
>
> What did (didn't) you like about the pictures in the story? Why?
>
> What were you thinking while I was/you were reading this book?
>
> What were you feeling while I was/you were reading this book?
>
> What did you think about this book? Why?
>
> STAGE TWO: The dominant ideas of Stage Two pertain to the subject or topic focused on in the story and the representation of reality and believability. At this stage, the basic purpose of a story (or illustrations) is to represent something. A story (or illustration) is better if the subject (topic) is pleasing and if the representation is realistic and/or believable. Emotion in the story is appreciated only if it is credible and believable to the reader. Readers admire illustrations which suggest skill, patience, and detail. Beauty, realism, believability and skill of author/illustrator are

criteria for making objective judgments. The reader is cognizant of the viewpoint of other people. Readers also begin to become aware of literary genre, forms of literature, and styles of illustrations, but make subjective judgments about them.

Questions at Stage Two--All of the questions listed above plus

What did the author/illustrator do to help you get to know the characters?

What did the author/illustrator do to help you get to know the setting and problem?

What did the author/illustrator do which helped you know what the main character(s) thought or felt about themselves? About the other characters? About the problem?

What did the author/illustrator do which helped you know what the other characters thought about the main character(s)? About the problem?

Do you think the illustrations were well (poorly) done? Why?

How do your opinions about the story (illustrations) compare with those of your classmates? Adult reviewers?

STAGE THREE: The organizing insight of Stage Three has to do with the intensity of the emotions expressed by the characters and the response of the reader. The reader looks at the stories or illustrations for the quality of the experience the story/illustrations can produce, and the more intense and interesting the experience the better the stories or the illustrations are. Intensity and interest guarantee that experience is genuine; it is really felt. It is always a matter of what is inwardly grasped by the reader. Creativity, originality, depth of feeling are newly appreciated characteristics of story and illustrations. Subject matter, realism of style or content, and skill are not seen as ends in themselves.

The important criterion at Stage Three is the intensity of the reader's personal emotionally felt experience. Therefore, the reader is either unable or unwilling to evaluate objectively the stories or the illustrations. Stage Three rests on a new awareness of one's own experience as something inward and unique. At Stage Three one is open to a wider range of stories and has a better grasp of expressive qualities.

Questions to ask at Stage Three--All of the questions listed above plus

I wonder is there anything about this book which you think it is special? What is it? Why is it so special for you?

How did this story make you feel? How did your classmates feel? How are their feelings the same or different from yours?

Pretend you are a book illustrator and an editor said he/she might hire you to illustrate this entire story if you can prove to him/her that you were able to create an effective book jacket (cover). I wonder what kind of book jacket you would make for this book? Why?

What is the most interesting (memorable) incident in this story? or Who is the most interesting (memorable) character in this story?

STAGE FOUR: The new insight at Stage Four is that the significance of a selection exists within a tradition which has been determined over an extended period of time, by many people reading numerous stories (or looking at numerous illustrations), talking about them, and finding some more meaningful than others. Aspects of the story or illustrations which determine that it is literature can be identified by the reader in an intersubjective way; in other words, the reader can now grasp that there are relationships between different kinds of stories, forms of literature, styles of art in the pictures. At Stage Four, the emphasis is on the way the author uses words or how he/she creates the story within the characteristics of the genre or how the illustrator uses his/her medium, color, form, and space. These elements or characteristics are how a selection relates to the norms or criteria established by tradition. At Stage Four, one distinguishes between the literary appeal of the subject and the sentiment and what is achieved in the work itself. It enables one to find book reviews as a guide to perception and to see aesthetic judgment as reasonable and capable of objectivity. An example of this is when one reads several reviews of the same story and sees how each reviewer makes sense in his/her own terms and yet is part of the same tradition.

Questions to ask at Stage Four--All of the questions listed above plus

Using the criteria of quality literature evaluate how this book does or does not satisfy these criteria.

How does your evaluation of this book compare with your classmates and/or professional reviewers? What are the differences or similarities between your evaluation and theirs? Why do you think your classmates and the professional reviewers made these decision about this book? How do you feel about that?

If you found out that you had the opportunity to recommend this book for the Caldecott Medal which is given to the illustrator for the most distinguished illustrations or the Newbery Medal which is given to the author for the most distinguished writing, would you recommend this book for this award? Why or why not?

How effectively (ineffectively) do the illustrations convey and extend the parts (elements) of the story?

What genre is this story--historical fiction, modern fantasy, modern realistic fiction, biography, etc.? What caused you to classify it in this way? Describe what the author did to develop effectively (ineffectively) each of the characteristics of this genre.

STAGE FIVE: The central insight at Stage Five is that the reader's judgement about quality literature is both personal and fundamentally social. The reader judges the validity of the characteristics and criteria with which tradition determines the quality of literary works of art. The reader continually modifies the characteristics and criteria to fit his/her own experiences with literature. At this stage the reader has to come to grips with the conflict between his/her personal judgment and that of tradition. On the one hand, the responsibility for judgment lies inevitably with self; one's own experience and personality is in the end the only possible testing ground for judgment. On the other hand, the accepted views of appropriate judgment in light of tradition must be considered. At Stage Five, judgment is seen as capable of reasonable agreement, and at the same time as dependent on personal discretion. At this stage, one must transcend the point of view of the culture which established the criteria or literary traditions. It requires the ability to raise questions about established views and to understand the self as capable of responding to them. Thus one must know the culture, the traditional expectations regarding literature and book illustration held by that culture, but one must recognize that these expectations or standards are meant to be interpreted flexibly.

Questions to ask at Stage Five--All of the questions listed above plus

What is your personal opinion about this book? Explain.

Would you modify any of the criteria or characteristics which tradition has established for this kind of literature? Explain.

Do you think that this is the best or the worst book that you have ever read? Why? Compare this book with others you have read. Would you choose this book as the best book if there were other books that were of equal worth (quality) on the same subject? On different subjects? By the same author? By different authors?

The following statements made by the teachers within the end of the first year of the study (1990-1991) reflect their reactions to the use of the questions they created to foster children's ability to grow in their critical aesthetic response to literature as suggested in Parson's five developmental stages. By consistently using these questions when teaching literature,

Teacher 10 determined that her grade-four students had reached Parsons's Stage Four (described above) at least in response to modern realistic fiction and animal fantasy. During an individual conference between Patricia Cianciolo and Teacher 10 in Winter 1991, the following discussion took place.

Teacher 10: My concern is that unless the children have a visual to look at, they can't keep all these genres correct. We try to review, but that all takes time.

Pat C.: If they have a visual they can check what they have forgotten. Responding to literature by using specific criteria is a sophisticated way of having children interpret or even react to literature. I see nothing wrong with having the criteria listed on a visual, except put the visual up after the children have experienced the story and you have helped them identify what the characteristics are for that genre.

Teacher 10: They have pages of notes about the characteristics of modern realistic fiction, so can that be condensed? What are the little kernels of characteristics of modern realistic fiction? Even like historical fiction, some of those same characteristics from modern realistic fiction are there, but then you have a few extra things.

Pat C.: You'll have two things for them to deal with: one is what makes for a good story regardless of whether it is modern realistic fiction, fantasy, or historical fiction. For example, the characters are really believable and have distinct personalities, or the reader can visualize the setting, and/or the action. Maybe they can tell an author by his style of writing or his sense of humor or the themes he focuses on.

Teacher 10: So you are really saying what makes good literature?

Pat C.: Yes. Then you take all of those components of literature. First, the characterization, how believable and how distinctive, how identifiable or individual each of the characters are. Then second, you take the setting. You should be able to visualize where the story takes place, and when the story takes place. Third, they should visualize, create their own images of the action. They should be able to really feel and know exactly what is happening in the story and how the characters feel as a result of being involved in or being a victim of that action. Fourth, would be to understand, or identify with the characters' feelings. I guess you would get into the mood of the story, but in childlike terms. So it is characterization, setting, mood, theme, and action. The theme or message, a conclusion so that the readers can say what the story is about should also be considered. Those are the elements or components of any kind of literature.

Teacher 10: So that's a chart?

Pat C.: Yes. So you might do it this way. You and your students should develop a chart listing the characteristics of literature in general and then have a chart for modern realistic fiction and another chart for animal fantasy, which they have already read. They are reading historical fiction now. So you and the children could develop the individual chart for that genre when they have finished reading the story. What do you think?

Teacher 10: I think that would help clarify this in their minds.

Teacher 10 followed up on this discussion by having her grade-four students jointly identify the characteristics of the genres they studied. She continued this activity throughout the 1990-1991 school year as the students read each of the genres. Two of these charts are presented below.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD LITERATURE

1. Plot must hold our interest.
2. Characters are believable and we can identify with their feelings.
3. Setting should help us visualize when and where.
4. Theme holds the story together.
5. Overall tone or mood is evident.
6. Language is used effectively.
7. Literature at its best gives both pleasure and understanding.

BIOGRAPHY

1. Tells the life or part of the life story of a person.
2. Must be accurate and authentic in portraying person and setting. Everything must be true.
3. Both strengths and weaknesses are shown.
4. Person's life should be worth reading about and portrayed as believable.
5. Should be interesting to read.

During the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1991), Teacher 10 said to Barbara Quirk,

> Teacher 10: I constantly go back to the genre charts that we made. First of all, we have to decide if this [selection being read] is good literature. Does it fit these five characteristics? And then, we'll go on and I try to get the kids to discuss or identify what genre it is. Then if it's historical fiction, is it a good historical fiction? First and foremost, they have to decide if it is good literature.
>
> Barb Q.: Do you find that the charts that you made for each of the genre and for the characteristics for good literature in general have been helpful to you and the students as they are thinking about these things?
>
> Teacher 10: I think it helps them sort out the different kinds of genre, and I think it helps them sort out what makes good literature. That's a lot of things to keep in mind. The charts help them organize their thoughts.

Interestingly, some teachers applied these questions when using literature in other areas. For example, during the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1991) Teacher 2 indicated that she found herself

> trying to use some of the questions we used in our literature time in other areas [of the curriculum]. When we [the grade-one teachers] would sit down and decide what kinds of activities we were going to do in our whole language lessons, we would always try to incorporate something from the literature as art angle too. We did a lot with modern realistic fiction and the characteristics of it and I can see the children wanting to share those kinds of responses and more of their feelings about stories when we're using literature in a different setting than just reading literature.

After the teachers worked with various versions of the questions they composed to elicit response at Parsons's five developmental stages, it was decided that the questions focused too much on the cognitive and seemed too preoccupied with arbitrary stages. They appreciated that children did go through various stages of aesthetic development, but they wanted to devise questions that would elicit more affective kinds of responses and would tend to elicit higher order critical aesthetic responses to literature more naturally and spontaneously. We then examined the principles and conditions for developing response-based teaching put forth by Robert Probst (1988, 1989).

According to Probst (1991) the classroom and the curriculum are frequently stumbling blocks for allowing students to express and develop their individual responses. Students are generally trained from their first experience in school to produce answers to multiple choice questions, to find out precisely what they need to know, to accumulate information and develop skills. In addition, students, and many times the teachers, perceive the teacher as the source of knowledge. Consequently, the study of literature in school negates individual responses which may be in conflict with the person traditionally viewed to be in authority, namely the teacher. "The literature experience is fundamentally an unmediated, private exchange between a text and a reader" (p. 655).

We examined carefully Probst's (1988) principles and conditions for developing response-based teaching. He asserted, first, that the literary selection should be chosen by teachers because it is quality literature rather than as an example of genre or because of the content. Students, when allowed to select their own books, will choose a selection because it focuses on a topic they are interested in (survival, war, sports, cars, hunting, a particular problem in human relations such as sibling rivalry, substance abuse, and child neglect or abuse), or because someone of significance to them (peers or a much admired adult--parent, teacher, librarian) has demonstrated in some way that he/she found it much to his/her liking. They tend not to choose a selection because it is a good example of a genre, or about a specific period of history, or demonstrates particular literary techniques. Second, Probst emphasized that discussion and/or writing about one's responses to a literary selection should start with the students' responses. The teacher should not control the discussion to a predetermined conclusion by asking leading questions that call for convergent thinking. Through their

questions, literature teachers should encourage the students to go beyond their initial responses, to think critically about their answers. Their questions should call for scrutiny of the work, but should not obliterate the personal element of reading (Probst, 1988).

Based on our experiences with the questions we developed for Parsons's perspective of response and our study of Probst's theory of response, we concluded that Probst's theory appeared to be a fairly balanced combination of the cognitive and affective aspects of response. We then proceeded to pose a set of questions which were compatible with those recommended by Probst (1989). We adapted and reworded them extensively so they would be more appropriate for use with students in the elementary grades. Although, our adaptations of Probst's questions had to be modified slightly when used with the kindergartners and first graders, they seemed to be the right balance of cognitive and affective responses. It should be kept in mind that only some of the questions in each category were asked of the students during any one discussions session. Depending on the background of experience with literature and maturity level of the students, each teacher would slightly modify the wording (but not the meaning) of these questions.

A. Initial affective and cognitive response to literature.

   1. What did you notice about this story? Poem?

   2. What do you think or how do you feel about this story? Poem?

   3. What ideas or thoughts come to mind (were suggested) by this story? Poem?

   4. Did you feel a part of this story or did you feel you were watching (or observing) what was happening in the story? Describe, explain, elaborate, etc.

B. Focusing on aspects of the story or poem or illustrations without ignoring the role of the reader while reading the selection.

1. What got your attention? What part of the story did you focus on (concentrate on)? What word(s), phrase, image, idea, or illustration do you think caused you to focus on that part of the story? Poem?

2. If you were to write (or tell someone) about this story, what would you focus on (emphasize)? Would you choose a memory or association it triggered, an aspect (part) of the story, something about the illustrations, something about the author or illustrator, or something else about the selection? Describe, explain, elaborate, etc.

3. What in this selection (the story, the illustrations, or your reading of it) pleased you? Upset you? Caused you the most trouble?

4. Do you think this is a good piece of literature? Why? Why not?

5. If you were an illustrator what picture would you make to interest someone in this book?

C. Direct attention to the context in which the selection(s) is encountered--a context of other readers, other texts, and personal history.

1. What memories do you have after reading this story: memories of people, places, sights, events, smells, feelings, or attitudes?

2. What sort of person do you think the author is? The illustrator?

3. How did your reading of this selection differ from that of your classmates, professional reviewers? How was your reading of it similar?

4. What did you observe (notice) about the others in the class as they read or discussed this story? Poem?

5. Does this selection remind you of any other literary work--such as a poem, other story, television program, commercial film? If it does, what is the name of the selection? What connection do you see between the two works?

The teachers in kindergarten and grade one modified the questions above.

A. Initial affective and cognitive response to literature.

1. What do you think about this book?

2. What thoughts came to your mind as I read this story?

3. Did you feel a part of this story or did you feel as if you were watching what was happening?

B. Focusing on aspects of the story or poem or illustrations without ignoring the role of the reader while reading the selection.

1. What got your attention--words, phrases, or illustrations?

2. What would you emphasize if you told someone about the story?

3. What in this story caused you the most trouble?

4. What person, place, or experience did this story remind you of?

5. Do you think this is a good story? Why? Why not?

C. Direct attention to the context in which the selection(s) is encountered--a context of other readers, other texts, and personal history.

1. What sort of person do you think the author/illustrator is? Why?

2. Does this story remind you of another book? What is it? Why

We found that questions designed to encourage critical aesthetic response which is a combination of the affective (feelings and emotions) as well as the intellectual (cognitive) should be asked of the students before introducing them to any other activities related to literature. Or, at least the activities related to literature should be based on these kinds of questions.

Teacher 11 divided her grade-five students into three small groups for the purpose of sharing their responses to their individual literary selections which they read during their unit on children as victims of war. Jeremy read Snow Treasure by Marie McSwigan, Roy read The Madlenado Miracle by Theodore Taylor, Judith read When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit by Judith Kerr, Mary read Goodnight, Mr. Tom by Michelle Magorian, Patricia read Summer of My German Soldier by Bette Greene, and Karen read Park's Quest by Katherine Paterson.

Teacher 11 gave the students a list of Probst's questions to guide their discussions. The following is a transcript of a portion of the discussion during which this group of students shared their responses to their literary selections. The three Probst's questions they chose to focus on during this portion of the discussion were (1) What were you thinking about or feeling when you read this story? (2) What did you notice about the novel? (3) Did you feel a part of this story? Why or why not?[5]

Barb Q: What were you thinking about or feeling when you read the story?

Patricia: Every time her dad would beat her I would almost not want to read the book. I was really upset for her because of all of the bad things that were happening to her. She was just really, really upset in the book.

Roy: I was always wondering what would happen next and I'd stop and think about it and try to guess.

Karen: At the end I was thinking about whether Park and his mother would be closer together because his mom wouldn't tell him anything [earlier in the story]. I think they probably would be more closer now.

Barb Q.: Why do you think that?

Karen: Because now he knows the truth and she probably would tell him more.

Jeremy: When they were taking the gold from the cave I was scared they would get caught and that they would be put to death and all the gold would be found.

Barb Q: What did you notice about the novel?

Jeremy: I noticed that I was sorta getting into the book and feeling what the children were feeling in the book.

Barb Q: Why do you think you were feeling this way?

Jeremy: Well it said in the book this might have been true but no one knows for sure.

Barb Q: Did they find the gold?

---

[5]Student dialogue and writing kept as is to preserve authenticity.

Jeremy: Yes. It was brought back to Norway from the United States after the war.

Mary: I have a question. Couldn't they find the kids? They were probably about 11 when this happened. They're probably in their 50s now.

Jeremy: They could have moved. The oldest [character] is 12. Besides the author probably didn't use the same names even if it's true.

Barb Q: Did you feel a part of the story? Why or why not? Think about what the author did to make you feel a part or not feel a part of the story.

Mary: I felt like I was looking in a window.

Jeremy: Or like watching a play or something. If you're looking through a window you couldn't really hear what people are saying inside.

Mary: Yeah

Barb Q: So you didn't really feel a part of the story, but you felt like you could see it happening?

Mary & Patricia: Yes

Patricia: I felt like Mary did. Like I was watching it happen in front of me. Like when the soldier came down from the hide-out when the father is beating the girl. He risks his life to be seen and put back in the prison camp to stop the dad. I really felt like I was in there. It's just the way books are.

Jeremy: Patricia, did you feel like you were watching it happen but you couldn't do anything about it?

Patricia: Yes. Like when the father was beating her I'd want to jump out there and do something. But it's like you're watching a movie on a big screen.

Teachers evaluated their questions by noticing the changes which have occurred over time in the quality of students' responses to the literature they read independently or that was read to them and by noticing the students' ability to use critical thinking skills and strategies independently when reading new literary selections and new kinds of literature. The teachers also observed the length of time the students engaged in more thoughtful group

discussions, the characteristics of the students' questions, as well as their awareness of their own processes of and progress in critical aesthetic response to literature. Whether or not the students are able to respond more consistently at a more advanced level of critical aesthetic response to literature, and pay attention to and seem to be genuinely interested, respectful and appreciative of others' points of view were also be noted. The following statements made during their individual end-of-the-year interviews (Spring 1992) highlight the teachers' interest in learning more about the role of questioning in critical aesthetic response to literature.

> Teacher 1: I worked on the kinds of questions I asked the children [in kindergarten] because it was hard for them to say why they liked a book. They could tell you they liked it or they didn't, but not why. I thought maybe I was not asking the right questions so I tried to refine that process a little bit by following the question, What part of the story did you like? with Did it make you feel good or sad? I still didn't get very far. I had some pretty sharp kids, but nobody could ever really tell me why they liked the story.
>
> Teacher 2: The Probst questions were helpful because they got into the feelings of the characters and how the illustrators were showing those feelings. We did a great deal with modern realistic fiction [in grade one] and the children were relating those books to their own experiences. [I was] trying to get them beyond just relating it to their own experiences. I'm not sure how [successful I was], but it's [Probst's questions] a real good guide for me to have. Something concrete to relate to.
>
> Teacher 8: The Probst questions helped clarify what I was trying to accomplish when teaching literature [in grade two], but I am not sure why. For some reason with his questions, there was more of a connection between the questions and literature as an art form. It became clearer for me.
>
> Teacher 9: I went back to the [Parsons's] questions that were developed last year and I felt that for the most part [my grade-four students] could begin more or less on level three. The kids were ready to give examples of how the author led you to believe something. I started with the questions from last year and then began using the Probst questions [after we adapted them]. I think that they somewhat restated some of the Parsons's questions in a more concise way. I felt it was a fairly concise grouping of questions to work with and you could easily reword the Probst questions.

Varied Types of Literature

One major objective of this study was to help elementary school pupils become acquainted with all types of literature. Each literary genre enables authors to interpret, make a personal comment about, and respond imaginatively to human experiences in different ways. Likewise each literary genre enables the reader to interpret, make a personal comment about, and respond imaginatively to human experiences in different ways. Therefore reading a variety of genre broadens readers' horizons. Experiencing a variety of types of literature provides opportunities for readers to acquire individual literary preferences; thereby, it promotes the development of individuality which is an educational goal we treasure.

Most teachers tend to use contemporary realistic and historical fiction, but seldom use science fiction or high fantasy. Our experience over the past two years with the teachers at Blaine and the statements made by students in our undergraduate and graduate children's literature courses supports this charge. This may be so because modern realistic fiction connects easily with the children's here-and-now world; therefore, students can easily be motivated to read it. Historical fiction lends itself to being used as a source for teaching historical facts. In general, both of these types of literature are considered serious; therefore, teachers feel justified having the students read/study them during the school day. In contrast, fantasy and science fiction/science fantasy are considered frivolous and imaginative, and suitable primarily for purposes of entertainment and escape; thus, teachers are hesitant to use school time for this kind of reading. Furthermore, in order to understand, appreciate, and enjoy science fiction/science fantasy the reader must have some knowledge of science which is often a problem for both teachers and students. So they tend to avoid reading it. Both science

fiction/science fantasy and high fantasy are based on the "what if" premise. Learning how to think in terms of "what if" helps one acquire the habit of thinking of options which counters the traditional educational emphasis on certainties, for example, good or bad, right or wrong, and one answer for every problem.

In the 1990-1991 school year, the total number of books read in grades one, two, and three ranged from 72 in Teacher 4's grade-one class to 232 in Teacher 8's grade-three class (see Table 2). Among the 72 titles Teacher 4 read 6 different types of literature, namely 30 poetry, 5 concept, 13 modern fantasy, 4 folk tales, 17 contemporary realistic fiction, and 3 informational books. The 232 titles read in Teacher 8's classroom included 8 different types of literature, namely 39 poetry, 2 concept, 22 modern fantasy, 14 historical fiction, 32 biography/autobiography, 23 folk tales, 67 contemporary realistic fiction, and 33 informational books.

In the 1991-1992 school year, the total number of books read in grades one, two, three ranged from 74 in Teacher 4's grade-one class to 365 in Teacher 5's grade-two class (see Table 3). Among the 74 titles Teacher 4 read 6 different types of literature, namely 4 concept, 12 modern fantasy, 1 historical fiction, 7 folk tales, 29 contemporary realistic fiction and 21 informational books. Among the 365 titles Teacher 5 read 8 different types of literature, namely 117 poetry, 23 concept, 35 modern fantasy, 8 historical fiction, 11 biography/autobiography, 16 folk, 33 contemporary realistic fiction, and 122 informational books.

In the 1990-1991 school year, the total number of books read in grades four and five ranged from 26 in Teacher 12's grade-five class to 153 in Teacher 9's grade-four class (see Table 2). The 26 titles read in Teacher 12's classroom included 4 types of literature, namely 8 modern fantasy, 4

Table 2

Varied Types of Literature
1990-91

Name	Grade	Poetry	Concept	Modern Fantasy	Historical Fiction	Biography/ Autobiography	Folk	Contemporary Realistic Fiction				Info	Total Books Read
								1	2	3	Total		
Teacher 2	1	38	15	34	0	0	10	49	6	0	55	14	166
Teacher 4	1	30	5	13	0	0	4	13	0	4	17	3	72
Teacher 5	2	35	3	18	1	3	14	58	3	8	69	30	173
Teacher 7	3	24	2	25	13	32	28	50	10	8	68	24	216
Teacher 8	3	39	2	22	14	32	23	23	39	5	67	33	232
Teacher 9	4	10	2	12	40	29	2	11	3	32	46	12	153
Teacher 10	4	2	0	12	5	65	5	13	0	4	17	6	112
Teacher 11	5	5	0	4	11	1	18	3	1	0	4	4	47
Teacher 12	5	0	0	8	4	0	6	7	1	0	8	0	26
Teacher 13	Mult	0	4	22	1	0	3	28	0	0	28	4	62

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Table 3

Varied Types of Literature
1991-92

Name	Grade	Poetry	Concept	Modern Fantasy	Historical Fiction	Biography/ Autobiography	Folk	Contemporary Realistic Fiction				Info	Total Books Read
								1	2	3	Total		
Teacher 2	1	12	20	37	1	0	11	31	3	15	49	12	172
Teacher 4	1	0	4	12	1	0	7	26	0	3	29	21	74
Teacher 5	2	117	23	35	8	11	16	31	0	2	33	122	365
Teacher 8	2	36	18	31	7	6	16	28	0	23	51	40	209
Teacher 7	3	26	10	17	14	40	34	45	5	21	71	46	258
Teacher 9	4	54	2	9	2	26	14	5	5	11	21	19	147
Teacher 10	4	0	4	3	7	4	16	7	3	12	22	14	70
Teacher 11	5	1	0	7	26	4	2	3	4	22	29	11	80
Teacher 12	5	0	0	4	10	0	0	3	2	5	10	1	25
Teacher 13	Mult	0	8	15	2	0	4	5	0	11	16	7	52

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historical fiction, 6 folk tales, 8 contemporary realistic fiction. The 153 titles read in Teacher 9's class included 8 types of literature, namely 20 poetry, 2 concept, 11 modern fantasy, 40 historical fiction, 26 biography/ autobiography, 2 folk tales, 46 contemporary realistic fiction, and 6 informational books.

In the 1991-1992 school year, the total number of books read in grades four and five ranged from 25 in Teacher 12's grade-five class to 147 in Teacher 9's grade-four class (see Table 3). The 25 titles read in Teacher 12's classroom included 4 types of literature, namely 4 modern fantasy, 10 historical fiction, 10 contemporary realistic fiction, and 1 informational book. The 147 titles read in Teacher 9's fourth-grade class included 8 types of literature, namely 54 poetry, 2 concept, 9 modern fantasy, 2 historical fiction, 26 biography/autobiography, 14 folk tales, 21 contemporary realistic fiction, and 19 informational books.

When one examines the increases in the types of literature used (see Tables 2 & 3), one will find some interesting changes. The total number of books read in Teacher 2's grade-one classroom rose from 166 in 1990-1991 to 172 in 1991-1992 constituting a slight rise in all types of literature. The largest increase (from 14 to 42) was in the number of informational books which were used in connection with classroom themes on bears, birds, the farm, seeds, and dinosaurs.

Teacher 5's considerable increase of total books read from 173 in 1990-1991 to 365 in 1991-1992 appears to be a result of an increase in the number of individualized selections and in poetry. The students in Teacher 5's grade-two classroom were introduced to the following poets: Joanne Ryder, Aileen Fisher, Arnold Adoff, and Lee Bennett Hopkins poet and anthologist. Teacher 5 encouraged individual selection and reading through the use of

numerous series books, for example, Henry and Mudge series by Cynthia Rylant, Frog and Toad series by Arnold Lobel, Rotten Ralph series by Jack Gantos, A boy, a frog, and a toad series by Mercer Mayer, Encyclopedia Brown series by Donald Sobol, Box Car Children series by Gertrude Chandler Warner, Amelia Bedelia series by Peggy Parish, and Henry and Ramona series by Beverly Cleary.

The total number of books read in Teacher 7's grade-three classroom rose from 216 in 1990-1991 to 258 in 1991-1992 constituting a slight rise in all types of literature. The largest increase (from 24 to 46) was in the number of informational books which were used in connection with a schoolwide theme on tools and techniques and a classroom unit on the states in the United States.

Teacher 11's considerable increase in total books read from 47 in 1990-1991 to 80 in 1991-1992 was also a result of the increase of children reading individual selections in conjunction with two major themes, multiculturalism and children as victims of war. Although Teacher 11 included some picture books in most of the units in her grade-five classroom, she chose to focus on the characteristics of Picture Books as a specific type of literature within the all school theme of multiculturalism. Before reading the following picture books depicting diverse cultures, ethnic, and racial groups, all grade-five students attended a slide presentation and discussion about the images of minorities in book illustrations given by Cianciolo.

In addition to Pat Cummings's books (the 1991-1992 visiting author/illustrator), the students read other picture books which depicted experiences of persons of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Some of the books depicting these diverse experiences were <u>In for Winter, Out for Spring</u> written by Arnold Adoff and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney (African American), <u>The Patchwork Quilt</u> written by Valerie Flournoy and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

(African American), Night on Neighborhood Street written by Eloise Greenfield and illustrated by Jan Spivey Gilchrist (African American), Amazing Grace written by Mary Hoffman and illustrated by Caroline Binch (African American), One of Three written by Angela Johnson and illustrated by David Soman (African American), The Flute Player written and illustrated by Michael Lacapa (Traditional Apache), Silent Lotus written and illustrated by Jeanne M. Lee (Traditional Cambodian), The Orphan Boy written by Tololwa Mollel and illustrated by Paul Morin (Maasai, South African), Friendship Across Arctic Waters: Alaskan Cub Scouts Visit Their Soviet Neighbors written by Claire Rudolf Murphy and photographs by Charles Mason (Alaskans and Siberian Yupik Russians), Tar Beach written and illustrated by Faith Ringgold (African American), A Visit to Oma written and illustrated by Marisabina Russo (Eastern European American), Charlie's House written by Reviva Schermbrucker and illustrated by Niki Daly (South African), Storm in the Night written by Mary Stoltz and illustrated by Pat Cummings (African American), Angel Child, Dragon Child written by Michele Maria Surat and illustrated by Vo Dinh Mai (Vietnamese Immigrant), and The Hundred Penny Box, written by Sharon Bell Mathis and illustrated by Leo and Dianne Dillon (African American).

During the children as victims of war unit all of the students read The Upstairs Room by Johanna Reiss and the majority then were encouraged to read at least one more selection based on the same theme. The selections used included Twenty and Ten by Claire Huchet Bishop, Number the Stars by Lois Lowry, Summer of My German Soldier by Bette Greene, The House of Sixty Fathers by Meindert DeJong, The Endless Steppe by Esther Hautzig, Park's Quest by Katherine Paterson, Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes by Eleanor Coerr, Stepping on the Cracks by Mary Downing Hahn, and many others.

Varied Uses of Literature

Another major objective of this study was to create an environment in which literature is valued and enjoyed for the aesthetic experience it offers as well as for the varied and valid uses one can make of it. The environment of a classroom is shaped and influenced by the approach to literature used by the teacher. Approaches to the study of literature for students from the elementary school through to the university level are diverse and often contradictory but all draw to some extent on current reading comprehension research, literary criticism theory, cognitive processing theory, social psychology, and/or discourse pragmatics.

Often literature is used in schools to accomplish character development and moralistic ends, for the purposes of bibliotherapy or personal adjustment, or to learn other content such as history, science, or reading skills such as phonics and structural analysis skills for decoding the printed word and comprehension. There is also some interest in using literature, especially major award books and classics, to provide students with a sense of cultural wholeness and/or historical continuity (Ravitch, 1985a, 1985b). A fairly new approach to teaching literature is to teach children to be critical readers of literature. Too infrequently literature in the elementary schools is used as a vehicle for enjoyment, entertainment, and recreation (Cianciolo & VanCamp, 1991; Cianciolo & Quirk, 1992). This study has focused on an approach which highlights the critical aesthetic response to literature.

In addition to our primary focus, the teaching of critical aesthetic response to literature as art, the tables below (4, 5, 6) demonstrate that the teachers participating in this study used many of these approaches. Two of the categories listed in the tables below may need clarification. When specifying Literature as Literature as the primary way a book was used in the

Table 4

Varied Uses of Literature
1990-91

		Literature as Literature		Subject Matter Emphasis									Literature as Literature PLUS Subject Matter Connection									Literature as Literature PLUS					
Name	Grade	No.	%	Writing	Reading Skills	Social Studies	Science	Art	Math	Celebrations	Total Number	Total %	Writing	Reading Skills	Social Studies	Science	Art	Math	Celebrations	Total Number	Total %	Integrated Themes	Teacher Favorite	Spontaneous Connections	Total Number	Total %	Total Books Read
Teacher 2	1	63	38	0	7	37	24	2	10	0	80	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	0	0	23	14	166
Teacher 4	1	8	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	5	8	4	0	0	3	20	27	35	8	1	44	61	72
Teacher 5	2	15	9	0	1	25	7	0	3	2	38	22	0	4	13	0	1	0	0	18	10	70	7	25	102	59	173
Teacher 7	3	52	24	0	52	61	20	1	1	9	144	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	1	3	20	9	216
Teacher 8	3	52	22	0	52	59	27	1	1	3	143	62	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	2	3	37	16	232
Teacher 9	4	41	27	0	8	60	0	1	0	5	74	48	1	6	0	1	2	0	0	10	7	26	2	0	28	18	153
Teacher 10	4	82	73	1	0	4	2	0	1	4	12	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	11	2	4	17	15	112
Teacher 11	5	12	26	0	5	8	0	0	0	0	13	28	0	1	10	0	0	0	0	11	23	10	1	0	11	23	47
Teacher 12	5	12	46	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	8	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	10	1	0	11	42	26
Teacher 13	Mult	26	42	0	11	0	0	1	0	3	15	24	0	4	0	0	0	0	5	9	15	12	0	0	12	19	62

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Table 5

Varied Uses of Literature
1991-92

		Literature as Literature		Subject Matter Emphasis									Literature as Literature PLUS Subject Matter Connection									Literature as Literature PLUS					
Name	Grade	No.	%	Writing	Reading Skills	Social Studies	Science	Art	Math	Celebrations	Total Number	Total %	Writing	Reading Skills	Social Studies	Science	Art	Math	Celebrations	Total Number	Total %	Integrated Themes	Teacher Favorite	Spontaneous Connections	Total Number	Total %	Total Books Read
Teacher 2	1	35	20	0	15	29	14	0	0	3	61	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	76	0	0	76	44	172
Teacher 4	1	20	27	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	12	0	0	0	0	0	13	18	39	0	0	39	53	74
Teacher 5	2	160	44	0	0	75	36	0	0	2	113	31	0	0	31	0	2	0	0	33	9	58	1	0	59	16	365
Teacher 8	2	26	12	9	10	55	36	0	0	11	121	58	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	57	4	0	61	29	209
Teacher 7	3	63	24	7	60	83	4	2	2	1	159	62	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	33	0	0	33	13	258
Teacher 9	4	37	25	0	0	18	0	0	0	0	18	12	45	0	32	0	0	0	0	77	53	14	0	1	15	10	147
Teacher 10	4	8	11	2	5	4	0	0	0	2	13	19	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	30	43	10	7	2	19	27	70
Teacher 11	5	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	6	11	0	0	0	0	18	23	57	2	0	59	74	80
Teacher 12	5	1	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	8	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	8	18	2	0	20	80	25
Teacher 13	Mult	31	60	0	3	2	0	0	0	7	12	23	0	1	7	0	0	0	1	9	17	0	0	0	0	0	52

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Table 6

Percent of Change

Name	Grade	Literature as Literature	Subject Matter Emphasis	Literature as Literature PLUS Subject Matter, Theme, Teacher Favorite, Spontaneous Connection	Total Books Read
Teacher 2	1	-18%	-12%	+30%	+3.61%
Teacher 4	1	+16%	+1%	-17%	+2.77%
Teacher 5	2	+35%	+9%	-44%	+110.98%
Teacher 7	3	0	-5%	+5%	+19.4%
Teacher 8	3-2	-10%	-4%	+14%	-9.91%
Teacher 9	4	-2%	-36%	+38%	-3.92%
Teacher 10	4	-62%	+8%	+54%	-37.5%
Teacher 11	5	-25%	-26%	+51%	+70.21%
Teacher 12	5	-42%	0	+42%	-3.85%
Teacher 13	Mult	+18%	-1%	-17%	-16.13%

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classroom, teachers included reading for enjoyment, as well as studying literature as a subject in and of itself. The other category is Literature as Literature PLUS Integrated Themes. We define integration as the purposeful intertwining of subject matters to achieve multiple goals with a major and minor focus on each subject used in the activity (Schmidt et al., 1985). During the first few months of this study a grade-five teacher used Sign of the Beaver by Elizabeth Speares to introduce the students to facts about the westward movement in the United States. She also asked the students to note the characteristics of historical fiction which were evident in this novel. Using literature as a tool for learning facts is an approach this teacher used for many years. Thus the major focus was to teach social studies and the minor focus was teaching literature as a subject, especially the characteristics of the genre of historical fiction. Often times teachers who use this approach to literature assume they are actually teaching literature because they are using it a vehicle for teaching some other subject or skill. In the second year of the study, she asked the students to examine how two authors used facts about World War II in their historical fiction novels (The Upstairs Room by Johanna Reiss, and Number the Stars by Lois Lowry). Though the students were learning facts about World War II, the major focus was on the characteristics of historical fiction per se.

During the first year of this study (1990-1991) the teachers were asked to focus primarily on the teaching of literature as literature, and we meant by that teaching critical aesthetic response. The second year of the study (1991-1992) teachers were asked to be certain that they provided experiences which would promote the development of critical aesthetic response before connecting or integrating literature with other subjects. Their literature charts indicate that these requests were honored at least in terms of the affective aspects.

In examining the data in Table 6, one will note some changes in teachers' uses of literature which occurred over the two years. The data for the three teachers discussed below demonstrate the most extreme changes particularly in the percentage of change in the total books used.

Teacher 5's percentage in change in the teaching of literature as literature was 35% increase: in 1990-1991 of the total books read 9% were used to teach literature as literature (Table 4), in 1991-1992 of the total books read 44% were used to teach literature as literature (Table 5). There was a decrease of 44% in the total number of books read to teach literature as literature plus subject matter and literature as literature plus integrated themes, teacher favorites, and spontaneous connections in Teacher 5's grade two class: in 1990-1991 of the total books read 69% were used to teach literature as literature in connection or integration with subject matter, integrated themes, teacher favorites, and spontaneous connections (Table 4), in 1991-1992 of the total books read 25% were used in this manner (Table 5). Teacher 5 indicated an increase of 9% in the total books used to teach just subject matter through literature: in 1990-1991 of the total books read 22% were used to teach subject matter only (Table 4), in 1991-1992 of the total books read 31% were used in this manner (Table 5). It should also be noted that Teacher 5 used a total of 110.98% more literature during the second year of this study: in 1990-1991 she used a total of 173 books (Table 4), in 1991-1992 she used a total of 365 books (Table 5).

Teacher 11's percentage in change in the teaching of literature as literature was a 25% decrease: in 1990-1991 of the total books read 26% were used to teach literature as literature (Table 4), in 1991-1992 of the total books read 1% were used to teach literature as literature (Table 5). There was a increase of 51% in the total number of books read to teach literature as

literature plus subject matter and literature as literature plus integrated themes, teacher favorites, and spontaneous connections in Teacher 11's grade two class: in 1990-1991 of the total books read 46% were used to teach literature as literature in connection or integration with subject matter, integrated themes, teacher favorites, and spontaneous connections (Table 4), in 1991-1992 of the total books read 97% were used in this manner (Table 5). Teacher 11 indicated a decrease of 26% in the total books used to teach just subject matter through literature: in 1990-1991 of the total books read 28% were used to teach subject matter only (Table 4), in 1991-1992 of the total books read 2% were used in this manner (Table 5). It should be noted that Teacher 11 used a total of 70.21% more literature during the second year of this study: in 1990-1991 she used a total of 47 books (Table 4), in 1991-1992 she used a total of 80 books (Table 5).

Teacher 10's percentage in change in the teaching of literature as literature was a 62% decrease: in 1990-1991 of the total books read 73% were used to teach literature as literature (Table 4), in 1991-1992 of the total books read 11% were used to teach literature as literature (Table 5). There was a increase of 54% in the total number of books read to teach literature as literature plus subject matter and literature as literature plus integrated themes, teacher favorites, and spontaneous connections in Teacher 10's grade two class: in 1990-1991 of the total books read 16% were used to teach literature as literature in connection or integration with subject matter, integrated themes, teacher favorites, and spontaneous connections (Table 4), in 1991-1992 of the total books read 70% were used in this manner (Table 5). Teacher 10 indicated an increase of 8% in the total books used to teach just subject matter through literature: in 1990-1991 of the total books read 11% were used to teach subject matter only (Table 4), in 1991-1992 of the total

books read 19% were used in this manner (Table 5). It should be noted that Teacher 10 used a total of 37.5% less literature during the second year of this study: in 1990-1991 she used a total of 112 books (Table 4), in 1991-1992 she used a total of 70 books (Table 5).

Though the teachers participating in this study had a history of using trade books in their teaching of reading and language arts, a number of them still followed some of the procedures recommended in the teacher's manuals which accompany the basal readers. Some of the strategies which did not appear to promote independent and/or critical thinking included the very common practice of motivating interest in the story by asking a question or offering an activity which would show students that the selection about to be read has some connection to their lives or to their interests or they would connect the students' prior knowledge or introduce new knowledge that was central to the understanding of the story. They would then present new vocabulary used in the story and concepts upon which the story is based. The first reading of a selection was either a shared experience, with the teacher reading aloud and the students joining in on a refrain or a predictable passage, or the students read the selections independently. In addition, considerable time and attention were devoted to postreading activities which called for literal comprehension rather than critical thinking. Some examples of such postreading activities are asking for a summary of the story, offering the students (in pairs or as a whole group) the opportunity to retell all or a portion of the story by encouraging them to add to or elaborate upon incidents that especially interest them, asking the student(s) to respond to a question posed before reading.

Enjoyment of literature is the fundamental and crucial factor in critical aesthetic response to literature as art. It must occur before any other

affective aspect of the process of responding to literature critically aesthetically. Enjoyment allows one to become involved in and to identify with the story. Involvement and identification allow one to engage in imaging and association. The process of engaging in affective responses such as enjoying, imaging, and association makes it easier and more pleasant for the reader to take an objective stance and engage in higher order cognitive thinking about literary forms, techniques, and styles of literature selections. When these affective responses are ignored and the cognitive aspects of critical response to literature are emphasized, teachers are less likely to build a firm foundation for a life long habit of reading. We will discuss below the data which demonstrate how the teachers facilitated some affective and cognitive aspects of critical aesthetic response to literature.

Enjoyment. Enjoyment is the foundation for developing the habit of reading. In other words, the reader must experience enjoyment and pleasure from having been read to or reading on his/her own. Therefore, when this study was initiated, teachers were asked to read literature to their students for the sole purpose of enjoyment. Several teachers responded to this request by saying "You mean you just want us to read the story?" In the beginning of the study it was very difficult for most of the teachers to change their pattern of always using the literary selections to teach content or skill objectives in a subject matter area. However, eventually all of them read literature first for enjoyment. Their statements below reveal their willingness to try new approaches and to use literature for different purposes, particularly reading literature for the pleasure and enjoyment it offers.

> Teacher 5 (Spring 1991): I read literature more for enjoyment than I used to. The last couple years I couldn't pick up a library book or go to the library and look at a book without thinking, Well I could do this, this, and this with it. Now I'm more comfortable just reading a book for enjoyment [to my grade-two students] and just letting the kids react to it. At this point, my kids almost

automatically talk about what the author did, whether or not the characters are believable, why this book is realistic fiction, or they'll talk about the illustrations.

Teacher 2 (Spring 1992): First of all, I want the kids to just really enjoy literature because if they do then they're always going to go back to it and appreciate it. I can see by their choice of books when they go to the library that now they appreciate literature.

Teacher 12 (Spring 1992): I wanted the kids to enjoy reading. To actually enjoy liking to read. I think it's important not to question the story to death, but just enjoy some reading. There are some that enjoy it and there are some that don't. I really feel bad because I think they [the ones who don't enjoy reading] are nonreaders yet. I wonder if there's something that I could have done but I just don't know what it was. At this time, at the end of the year, I feel like I've failed with those kids.

Associations. The associations and connections that come to mind when reading a story account in large measure for the unique and individual nature of response. The examples below dramatize how teachers encouraged students to verbalize this fundamental characteristics of response, namely associations and connections.

The first graders listened with obvious delight as Teacher 2 read aloud Shirley Hughes's upbeat here-and-now story of Alfie's Feet and showed them the animated, realistic line and full-color wash pictures. All eyes were on the pictures and they listened with rapt attention to every word. Their uninhibited responses to this thoroughly credible story demonstrated their delight with it: They giggled when Alfie counted his little sister's toes as he sang and played the game of "This Little Pig Went to Market." Their facial expressions and their comments revealed that they were obviously shocked, but amused, when Alfie stamped about in the mud and walked through the puddles left by a recent rainfall. As a matter of fact, their comments expressing dismay seemed to quite match those in the pictures showing Alfie when he discovered his shoes and socks and feet had gotten rather wet.

There was no question that Alfie's mother made the right decision to buy him a pair of shiny yellow boots in preparation for the next rainfall. In fact, the students' smiles suggested they were quite as pleased as Alfie obviously was with this purchase. They seemed to think that it was perfectly logical that the moment this young protagonist got back home he should unwrap his new boots, put them on by himself, and walk about the house in them. When they were told, through words and pictures, that Alfie realized that they "felt funny," it did not take very long before one child, then another noticed and smugly pointed out to their teacher and to their classmates that Alfie had put his new boots on the wrong feet. They seemed quite pleased that Alfie discovered by himself what was wrong and relaxed with satisfied expressions when Alfie's father helped him take off each boot and put it on the correct foot. There was an absolute avalanche of comments when Alfie's mother painted a big black 'R' on one of Alfie's boots and a big black 'L' on the other to help him remember which boot to put on which foot. Any number of these first graders seemed to want to tell one another that their mother or father, older brother or sister, or their kindergarten teacher did the very same thing with their boots and even with their mittens.

The next day, following the reading of Alfie's Feet, the teacher asked them to "think" about what happened to Alfie in this story. To help them remember the story, she showed them the pictures, holding each page open long enough so they could examine the pictures and comment to one another about what was happening in them if they wanted to. Then she asked them to tell one another what things in this story could indeed happen and what could not happen. In each case they were expected to explain why they thought these things were possible or not possible. At this stage in their development, their "proof" rested on their own experiences or those of others they observed

or heard about. For example, some of them related stories about getting their shoes wet and muddy and what their parents said or did to them on these occasions. Some described how it felt to wear shoes or boots that were on the wrong feet.

When the teacher asked them if people actually talked or behaved as all of the characters in this story did, and what made them think this was actually real or possible, there was no doubt in the students' minds that the author depicted such situations realistically. Here again they used their own actual or vicarious experiences to establish the realism or credibility of the characters' behavior. She then asked them to look at the illustrations to see if this story happened "now" or "long ago." Again, they were asked to explain why they placed it in the time period they did.

To a person, they said the story happened "now." To prove that they were correct, they confidently pointed to the clothes worn by Alfie, Annie Rose, the mother and the father, or the people who were shopping. In addition, the students said that these people wore clothes and eyeglasses like those they or members of their family wore. One child pointed to the earrings Alfie's mother wore, another child pointed to the automobile shown in the street scene, and another mentioned the toy telephone shown in one of the pictures. Then the teacher asked them if they could think of anything that happened in the story or if they noticed in the pictures anything that they thought "could never really happen." No one offered any examples. Then she asked them to look at the pictures again to determine if there were anything in these pictures which told them that maybe this story happened a long time ago. They agreed that nothing in the pictures suggested this. On the basis of these points the teacher said that Alfie's Feet was a kind of story called "modern realistic fiction."

Several days later, Eat Up, Gemma written by Sarah Hayes and illustrated by Jan Ormerod was read to these same first graders. This picture book offers a truly credible glimpse of the eating habits of Baby Gemma. She is depicted throwing her breakfast on the floor, squashing grapes, banging her spoon on the table, trying to eat the fake fruit off a lady's hat, and so on. As always, the teacher held the book open while she read the story to the children, so they were able to examine the pictures as the story was being read to them. The children were with this story every minute and, as children are inclined to do while listening to a story, some of them blurted out uninhibitedly their thoughts and feelings about what was happening. Later the children had a wonderful time discussing Baby Gemma's antics, laughingly comparing them with those of their siblings or even themselves when they were babies. When the teacher asked them if they could remember what kind of story she said Alfie's Feet was, one boy responded proudly, "Modern realistic fiction! And, this is modern realistic fiction, too!" "Now," said the teacher, "How do we know that Eat Up, Gemma is modern realistic fiction, too?" Just as they had done with Alfie's Feet, they were able to identify and explain how the characteristics of modern realistic fiction were reflected in Eat Up, Gemma.

The teacher asked them what they thought about each book. They had fun responding to this question as they recalled and chatted about specific incidents in each book which they liked. No one offered any negative comments about either of the books. The reasons they gave for choosing specific aspects of each story as those which they liked especially were: "Because it was funny"; and "Because that's what happened to me"; and "Because my sister likes to imitate me, too."

In anticipation of author/illustrator Pat Cummings's visit to Blaine school, some of the grade-two students in Teacher 5's class wrote letters to Artie, one of the main characters in Jimmy Lee Did It. Artie always blamed his imaginary friend, Jimmy Lee, when he got into trouble. The following letter reveals Brent's personal association with the character.

> Dear Artie,
> One time I had a problem when I was getting breakfast. A glass fell over and I said I didn't do it, my brother did it. But I had to clean it up--and I did. Then I ate breakfast. You had a problem just like me!
> Your friend,
> Brent

After Teacher 12 read Gray Boy by Jim Arnosky aloud to his grade-five students, they wrote their reactions to this story about a renegade dog that reverts to its wild and dangerous instincts. Bart made the following connection with his cats.

> I didn't like the story. Gray Boy was a sad story. A very sad story. It's a good animal realistic fiction book. I had a friend named Ian too. [Ian is the name of the main character in the book.] He was my best friend. I know where he lives but I live twelve blocks away. I had a cat, two of them. One named Fefe, and the other named Ricky. I loved them. Fefe stayed the longest. They didn't die, my mom and dad took them back [to the original owners]. I really miss them.

In her presentation for the International Reading Association's Spring 1992 conference, Teacher 11 reported that "as children begin to formulate their own associations as they read, their [responses]...become more individualized." She cited some examples of individualized responses which are presented below.

When her grade-five students read that Clay, the protagonist of Monkey Island by Paula Fox, was in the hospital, Kurt wrote in his journal:

> I know what it's like to be in a hospital for a little bit, because I've been in one [hospital] two times for putting tubes in my ears. The author is writing like it happened to her.

At the same point in the story, Courtney wrote in her journal:

> Paula Fox did a good job describing the hospital room that Clay's staying in. About how the nurse was wearing a hat and Clay wanted to feel it. Paula Fox described the hospital bed or crib as Clay calls it. I have stayed in a hospital before and when they bring you your food they put the side down and have you hold your food on a tray. I know how it feels to have an I-V. It stretches when you move your hand and it really hurts to put an I-V in.

As Teacher 11's class studied the units about the homeless, the immigration experience, the minority authors and illustrators as well as books about minorities, and children as victims of war, it became apparent that the students were making many associations about what they learned. Some students linked Clay's lack of food as a homeless person (depicted in Monkey Island) to the children suffering hunger in the concentration camp in the book Rose Blanche written by Roberto Innocenti. Freedom Train, written by Dorothy Sterling, which tells the story about Harriet Tubman and hiding the slaves on the Underground Railroad, was compared to Annie hiding in The Upstairs Room. Bette Bao Lord, the author of In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson, describes the protagonist's reaction to seeing the Statue of Liberty for the first time. When the students noticed this famous statue in one of the illustrations in C.L.O.U.D.S., a picture book written and illustrated by Pat Cummings, and when Cummings told them during her visit to the school that she is able to see the statue from her loft in Brooklyn, the protagonist's reaction in Lord's book became more meaningful to the students because they now knew more precisely what it looked like and how close it was to New York City. Surprisingly these children did not seem to know this. During the unit on immigration, the fifth graders researched some of their own families' history. A number of the children were surprised to find that some of their relatives fled Germany and Poland because of the war. These were unplanned outcomes that grew out of the questions which Teacher 11 asked as well as

spontaneous associations the children made during the course of their study of these units.

Imaging. The words authors use to describe the action and the setting and so on, help readers to create images involving all of the senses. In other words, the reader can create his/her images of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch through the author's use of words. Readers can also envision the characters' feelings and emotions in a well-written selection. Children revealed their sensory and affective responses to what they read by describing and/or drawing the pictures they created in their minds.

Five teachers, one in kindergarten, three in grade one, and one in special education (grades K-4) read More, More, More, Said the Baby: Three Love Stories by Vera B. Williams without showing the pictures. It should be noted that each of the three stories has characters of different races: Little Guy and his father are Caucasian, Little Pumpkin is African American and his grandmother is Caucasian, Little Bird and her mother are Asian. The students did not seem to focus or react to the differentness until the teachers probed their thinking by asking them to focus on the similarities and differences. Since there are three separate stories in this picture book, all of the teachers read one story each day. After reading each story, the children were paired, and each pair was given a sheet of paper with a portion of the text typed on it. The text was divided page-by-page exactly as it appears in the published book. The children then illustrated the portion of the text that appeared on their page. During the fourth lesson, the teachers read the book in its entirety showing the illustrations. The following is an abridgement of the transcript of Teacher 2's series of four lessons.

During the first lesson, Teacher 2 read aloud the first story entitled "Little Guy" to her grade-one students without showing the illustrations.

After dividing her students into pairs she gave each pair a sheet of paper with a portion of the text typed on it. After she read the one or two lines of text on the page, the pair returned to their seats and drew their pictures. When they finished drawing their pictures, they returned to the reading corner to share what they drew. As each pair showed their picture, the teacher asked them several questions about their pictures, for example, how old Little Guy was, what he looked like, what he and his dad were doing, what the setting looked like, and how the characters were feeling. This allowed the students to share what they were thinking and drawing. In general the children agreed that Little Guy was a boy between six months and two years of age, that the setting was outside, that the dad was playing with Little Guy, and that both Little Guy and his dad were happy.

The next day the teacher read the second story, "Little Pumpkin." She followed the same procedure as the previous day. Most of the students agreed that Little Pumpkin looked like a real pumpkin with a face and many included arms and legs. However, one pair of children drew a picture of a human grandma and baby. In addition, in five of the nine pictures grandma was a human figure. In general the students described Little Pumpkin as being a baby and grandma as being very old. As in the first story they believed the setting was outside and both of the characters were happy.

On the third day, Teacher 2 read "Little Bird" to the children. She followed the same procedure as the two previous day. All of the pictures were of two birds, mama and Little Bird. Though all of the children agreed that the setting was outside, some had the story taking place in a park, others in a forest, and others in a backyard.

On the fourth day Teacher 2 read the book aloud while showing the published illustrations; the characters are all people. The children joined

in with the teacher during parts of the first story. When she began reading "Little Pumpkin," the children were so surprised that they interrupted the teacher during her reading, which they would not normally do. "One student said, It's a real person. How can they make him real?" The students responded in much the same way when the teacher read the third story, "Little Bird." When Teacher 2 finished reading the entire book she gave her students the opportunity to respond to the published illustrations.

Teacher 2: Tell me what you think about the illustrations. Are they the same as ours?

Student: We thought they were animals, but they turned out to be people.

Teacher 2: What else did you notice about the illustrations?

Student: I thought that the pictures had dark colors and they popped out when people looked at the book.

Student: I thought Little Pumpkin was a pumpkin.

Teacher 2: Does that mean that your illustration was wrong?

Student: No.

Teacher 2: It just means that we all see it differently. The way we saw it in our minds is how we drew it. That doesn't mean that anyone is right or anyone is wrong as long as you make the picture the way you think it should be for what the text says. Were the characters the same in all three stories?

Student: No

Teacher 2: Can you tell me how they were different?

Student: Some is white, some is not. Little Guy is white.

Teacher 2: What else did you notice? Tell me more about the other characters. What about Little Pumpkin?

Student: He was a boy and we thought he was a pumpkin.

Teacher 2: Would you tell us how you think Little Guy and Little Pumpkin are alike or how they are different?

Student: One's a boy and one is a girl.

Teacher 2: Anything else?

Student: They have different colored skin.

Teacher 2: How are Little Bird and Little Pumpkin alike or different?

Student: They don't wear the same clothes.

Teacher 2: Any other way?

Student: Their skin is different. Little Pumpkin's skin is black and Little Bird's skin is white.

Teacher 2: What we need to remember is that one illustration isn't always the only illustration a story can have. If two different people were illustrating it, the illustrations could be entirely different. And that's okay. As long as the pictures go with the text on that page. We learned a lot about illustrations just looking at Vera Williams's illustrations and comparing them to the illustrations we made.

Each day during the unit on homelessness, Teacher 11 read aloud a chapter or so from Monkey Island by Paula Fox, a moving modern realistic fiction story about a boy (Clay) who was abandoned by his parents and lived in a park under the protection of an elderly man (Calvin) and a young adolescent (Buddy). The children were asked to record their reactions to the story in their journals each day. After reading about a special moment between Buddy and Clay, Mike drew a very revealing picture in his journal to express what he said was the most memorable part of the chapter. His picture showed Buddy standing behind Clay with his arms around the younger boy. The expression on the characters' faces and the stance of Buddy suggest that Mike wanted Buddy to protect Clay.

In the unit on children as victims of war, all of the students in Teacher 11's classroom read The Upstairs Room by Johanna Reiss. This is an autobiographical novel which is set in the Netherlands during the Nazi occupation and depicts the time in Reiss's life when she and her sister were hidden in an upstairs room of a farm home owned by the Oosterveld family. Aaron wrote in her journal:

> I remember seeing the house from the inside and from the outside and what the characters looked like, what the hiding place [under the floor in the closet] looked like. It was like a movie playing in my head as I was reading.

In this same unit Teacher 11 shared the picture book, Rose Blanche by Roberto Innocenti, with the children. This story tells about a young German girl who discovers a concentration camp in a woods near her home. When she finds hungry children there, she takes it upon herself to bring them food. When asked, Did you feel a part of this story? Why or why not? Jennifer wrote:

> I felt like I was sitting right next to Rose [during] the whole story. Like when she was walking down through the woods, I felt like I was right next to her talking to her and then understanding back what she was saying.

Affective response. The example below demonstrates the type of struggle a teacher who is used to offering literature to accomplish pragmatic objectives encounters when teaching critical aesthetic response to literature. Teacher 5 described her effort to understand and appreciate and then implement this approach to literature in a presentation at the national conference of the National Council of Teachers of English in Spring 1992.

> When I first became involved in the study of teaching children to respond critically aesthetically to literature two years ago, I thought I was already doing that because I was using literature to teach reading. I focused on decoding strategies and comprehension. I kept telling myself my students were responding to literature. I struggled. Finally I went to Pat Cianciolo, who was coordinating the study of the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature in our school, and told her that I needed "remedial help." We began meeting separately from the rest of the staff. She finally convinced me to completely separate books to teach literature from those I was using to teach reading. I fought this idea because I was convinced that I did not need to do that. Finally, in desperation, I tried Pat's suggestion. In the morning I used trade books to teach decoding and comprehension strategies; in the afternoon I used different trade books to focus on some of the aspects of response to literature as literature.
>
> When I looked back in March of 1992 at the entries in my daily plan book for the first few months of the first year of the literature study (1990-1991), I realized that the focus of my teaching objectives and questions were on the content of the stories

> or on individual decoding and comprehension skills and that it had taken me until December 1991 before I focused on what the students thought and how they felt about aspects of the story. It seems that at that point I began to make sense of and to understand what it means to teach children to respond critically aesthetically to literature, for it was not until then that I posed questions which encouraged students to respond cognitive and emotionally to the stories I read to them or they read independently.
>
> Now, at the end of the second year of the study, most of my lessons focus on response to the aesthetics of the literature we read. I presently encourage the development of critical aesthetic response to literature in trade books through all of the language arts. I think, that one can encourage this kind of response to literature as an art and also foster the development of literacy in a literature-based whole language approach. Furthermore, the district and state curriculum tests still show that my students are making gains in reading as measured by these tests.

During the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1991) Teacher 4 commented that prior to this study she would just read a book to her first graders and then go on to another one. She said "now the kids want to share their feelings about the book. They don't want the book just to be read to them and closed. They want an opportunity to respond to that book. To tell how they felt about that book."

At about the same point in this study, Teacher 8's observations of her grade-three students differed from those made by Teacher 4; "Some [of my] students are more willing than others to talk about how the book makes them feel." She indicated that she tried to help them feel more comfortable about sharing their feelings about the book and is beginning to notice a gradual improvement in this area of response.

Teacher 10 read The Bears' House and its sequel, Fran Ellen's House, by Marilyn Sachs, to her grade-four students. The Bears' House, a modern realistic story, is about children who were deserted by their father and have to take care of their mother who has postpartum depression and their infant baby sister, and have to fend for themselves. Although there are many sad parts in this story, the author periodically provides comic relief.

Interestingly, it is the humorous and happy parts of the story that the students tended to focus on when telling whether or not they liked it. Samantha, one of the grade-four students, is given a lot of responsibility for caring for her mother, who is an uncontrolled diabetic. In response to this story, Samantha wrote,

> The Bears' House was a fun book. I like it. We had lots in comin [sic] it had a lot of funny thing[s] in it. It talk[ed] about her school, her family. It was a good feeling inside of me. I like miss Thompson [the teacher in the story].

Scott who made it well known that he did not like coming to school indicated that he liked the story, but he stated different reasons.

> I liked The Bears' House because it was kind of funny and at the same time it was exciting because we stopped at [the end of] every chapter. So you are anches [sic] for tomorrow to come. I thought it was so exciting that you achuely [sic] want the next school day to come.

Quality literature should not only help children to think about what they read, but it should also evoke sincere emotional response on the part of the reader. The kinds of questions which are asked should provide opportunities for children to express their feelings evoked by a story. Teacher 11 frequently used the following two-part question for journal writing: How do you feel about what happened in the story today? Why do you feel that way? Kim's written response to this question after Teacher 11 read a chapter in Monkey Island follows.

> Today I feel real bad for Buddy, Calvin, and Clay. Because Clay is very sick and Buddy and Clay both don't have enuf [sic] money put together to pay Clay and Calvin's hospital bill! And I shure [sic] do have to say I'm VERY thankful I'm not homeless and I feel bad for people who are. And when I grow up I will take home homeless people. How is Clay and Buddy going to pay the hospital bill?

On another day Kelly wrote a journal entry which shows her feelings in response to Monkey Island.

> I felt shocked!
> I never knew gangs went after homeless people! And calling Buddy a "Nigger."

> I was so shocked!
> And where did Calvin go? Will Buddy save him if he got drunk? Does Buddy even care?

Both of these examples demonstrate that children will naturally ask themselves questions about what might happen next when reading quality literature that they identify with; the teacher does not have to do this for them.

After listening to the picture book Rose Blanche and seeing the illustrations, Matt wrote the following in his response journal:

> I was feeling very sad for the children that were poor and living in the wooden houses in the concentration camp. It took a lot of courage and feeling to go each day and try to help those kids. Those kids were very unlucky. I know what he [the author] meant about the mayor getting fat, he was getting all the food.

When asked the question Did you feel part of the story? Taniak answered:

> I felt like I was part of the story because when Teacher 11 was reading it, I was saying in my mind what if those kids were me, how would I feel, and would I feel scared? What happened to those kids was really scarey [sic] because [what] if I would [have] got taken [sic] away from my family and did not eat right or I did not take showers because I thought soldiers were going to burn me.

Megan said the following about Rose, the protagonist in the story:

> I was interested in what would happen next. I felt like I was that girl and I saw those Jewish people behind the fence. I was upset. When she heard the gunshot, what was going to happen next? Where were the Jews at that moment, were they dead or just killed. Maybe they were taken to a camp. It was so descriptive at every step.

Kathy wrote the following entry in her journal in response to The Upstairs Room.

> When I heard that the mother died I was upset, because I thought that would be pretty hard to go through a war and lose a mother at the same time. I mean I get upset when I hear there's a war going on in the Soviet Union. And thinking war is in my country and have my mother die would be very hard for me to go through.

Although these examples express a very somber and serious side to these children's thoughts, they also reflect the deep feelings that children are capable of having in response to literature.

Understanding Literary Forms, Techniques and Styles

Techniques and styles of illustrations. One of the strategies the teachers used to enhance the students' critical response to literature was to focus on the techniques and styles of illustrators. Children as well as teachers and librarians usually respond to this approach to the study of illustration with enthusiasm if it is not done too frequently and if one does not overload them with information. Therefore, some direct instruction about various techniques used by the illustrators is quite in order. This makes it possible for the students to learn how to really "see" more of the details in the pictures. This ability to learn how to "look" at pictures and really "see" what is in them will help the students become aware of what the illustrator did to help the reader appreciate, feel, and understand more fully the thoughts, needs, and emotions of the characters as they responded to one another and to the particular problem or conflict with which they were confronted. Some direct instruction helps the readers to get a more complete look at the setting and to gain a better understanding of the setting as a factor which may establish or intensify the nature and parameters of the mood of the story, and may even determine the character's response to his/her problem or conflict.

The following lesson, which occurred in March 1991, is an example of Teacher 16's approach to the study of illustrations with a grade-one class. The particular focus of this lesson is to introduce the students to an illustrator's use of perspective and the passage of time indicated in a series of pictures on the same page. The transcription of this lesson does not identify individual students' responses to the teacher's questions by number or name.

Teacher 16: This book is called Make Way for Ducklings. What we are going to do today is be looking real close at the pictures. So pay real close attention. This book is written by Robert McCloskey and he also drew the pictures. You know what was one really neat thing about Make Way for Ducklings? Before he drew the pictures he brought little ducks and big ducks into his apartment and kept them there so he could really see what ducks look like and how they ran and how they'd sit down. Do you know what else happened? He let them play in his bath tub.

The teacher then read the story aloud to the children, showing the illustrations at the same time.

Student: That was a good book.

Teacher 16: You thought that was a good book? What made you think this is a good book?

Students: Because it had good pictures in it and I liked it because the reading went along with the pictures.

Teacher 16: Are you saying the words went along with the pictures. Did you have one picture that you really thought that was what happened on it? Which one was it? Do you remember? Or all of them did that?

Student: They all did.

Student: The words went with the [pictures]. They said they were going to the fence and see they are marching and they are going to march right out of the car and then they go all the way back to their own place.

The discussion continued in this vein with several students adding their opinions.

Student: The ducklings went under the car.

Teacher 16: Why do you think Robert McCloskey drew the picture that way? Theresa said, "Look I noticed the ducks underneath the car." Now think about it. Why do you think Robert McCloskey drew the pictures that way?

Student: Because they don't want to get runned [sic] over.

Teacher 16: He drew them back under so they could be protected. What were you going to say?

Student: Maybe because he likes ducks.

Teacher 16: You know what I noticed about this picture? If you were laying down in the street you could see the ducks underneath the car.

He drew them like he could be close up to them, but on the other side of the car. That's what he has done here. This is called viewpoint.

Student: They are not really under the car?

Teacher 16: They are on the other side of the car. It's like you peeking down underneath something. That's how he drew them like that. Now I'm going to have you look at a picture and I want you to tell me what you notice about this picture. Take a good look and then raise your hand when you can tell me what you notice.

The teacher showed the students the end pages of this book which shows a progression of one duckling hatching from its shell.

Teacher 16: What did you notice?

Student: I noticed that they are all coming out [of the shell] at the same time.

Teacher 16: You think they are all coming out at the same time. How many ducks do you think this is?

Student: Four!!!

Teacher 16: Does somebody else think it's ... What do you think it is?

Student: I think they are hatching out of their eggs.

Teacher 16: This is what is happening. He is showing eggs hatching, but...

Student: One is standing up.

Student: Yeah, I noticed something, a beak

Student: This picture looks like when they are under the car.

Teacher 16: It kind of does. Doesn't it?

Student: There is only four ducks.

Teacher 16: You know what? These are not four different ducks. This is one duck. This is when he first came out of the eggshell. This is when he is kind of going, "Oh, I'm out of here. Let's see what's the world like?" What do you think this one tells us?

Student: It tells he is trying to walk, and then next one he is trying to walk.

Teacher 16: This is one duck and the different things he does. You know what this picture says to me. "Look. I'm going to get out of my shell, and then I'm going to start trying to walk, and now I'm walking. Let's get this story going. Let's see what is going to happen." He said let's turn the page. Look [at the picture] that duck is almost walking across the page, off the page. Now, get your eyes set for this. See what you can notice in this picture and think about what Robert McCloskey did when he drew this picture. Tell me what you notice.

Student: It's different because the ducks aren't hatched yet.

Student: The mother and the father are going so they can find a place to lay their eggs.

Teacher 16: And that's what the words told us, isn't it. And that's why he drew them like that.

Student: The ducklings got to find somewhere else to lay their eggs because they can't lay them right now because they would break.

Teacher 16: Look at this picture. He drew this picture from way up in the sky. It's called an aerial viewpoint.

The teacher had David stand on a chair so he can see over the heads of all the students sitting on the floor in front of him.

Teacher 16: This is like the ducks looking down, This is one viewpoint, you can look down on this group of friends of yours and see different things. What do you see on the top of Scott's head? Anything?

David: No.

Teacher 16: Do you see anything on the top of Susan's head?

David: Yes.

Teacher 16: What do you see

David: Little balls

Teacher 16: Scott, can you see the little balls on top of her head?

Scott: No.

Teacher 16: But David can because he is up here.

Scott: He's up in the air.

David, standing on the chair, is about even, face to face with the teacher.

Teacher 16: What is on top of my hair, can anyone see it?

David: No.

Students together: No

Teacher 16 then sat on a chair with David standing on a chair next to her and the rest of the children were sitting on the floor in front of them.

Teacher 16: Now can you see it, David?

David: It's a star.

Teacher 16: Look. He has a different viewpoint. Do you see that this is what McCloskey has done here. He has the ducks looking down. Let's go back to the picture [Teacher shows the students the illustration again]. He has the ducks looking down to see the little houses. The houses look tiny to them, don't they?

Throughout the two years of this study, all of the teachers taught numerous lessons about various facets of book illustrations. As a result of these lessons they noticed changes in students' responses to book illustrations. Teacher 5 said that the biggest change in her grade-two students was the way they focused on illustrations. She said, "It is amazing to me the comments they make [about the illustrations]." She noticed that the students compared and contrasted both the media and styles of art used by different illustrators. During the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1991), she said that in past years she always identified the authors and the titles of the books she read to her students, "but the illustrator was never a big part of our conversation. And now it is. They'll come back with library books and say 'Look this is illustrated by the same person that did such and such book.'"

Illustrations can be very important to a story because of their potential to extend the text by adding an extra dimension to the literary elements of

fiction which were established through the text. So, several teachers read or told a story without showing the students the illustrations. Then the students illustrated some of the images they created in their minds as they listened to the story. When they were finished drawing the pictures, the students compared their own illustrations with one another as well as with the illustrations included in the book. These comparisons dramatized to the students how diversely and effectively each of them, like a professional book illustrator, incorporated and extended the literary elements and the characteristics of picture books in his/her pictures. It should be noted that the teachers did not focus on either the professional illustrator's or particular students' talent or craftsmanship but on the students' interpretations of the text. The following titles were used most successfully in this manner by some of the teachers participating in this study: More More More: Three Love Stories, written and illustrated by Vera B. Williams in kindergarten, grade one, and in a special education resource room (grades K-4); Chrysanthemum, written and illustrated by Kevin Henkes in grades two and three; Guess Who My Favorite Person Is, written by Byrd Baylor and illustrated by Robert Andrew Parker in grade four; and Harald and the Knight, written and illustrated by Donald Carrick in grade five.

Regardless of the age of the children with whom this activity was used, it highlighted the most basic characteristics of a picture book: (1) The illustrations should support and extend the text; (2) the illustrations should offer the reader new or different ways of interpreting the printed word; and (3) the book artist's interpretations of the text are unique to him/her. Also, the students were delighted to have a chance to experience what it is actually like to be a book illustrator.

Teacher 5 commented that she and her grade-two students had spent a sizable amount of time looking at and critiquing illustrations. During the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1991), she related an incident which occurred when she was reading one of the books in the Salty Dog series written by Gloria Rand and illustrated by Ted Rand. In the text the author described a run down, old log house, but the illustrations did not support this description.

> As I was reading the story I was disturbed by this discrepancy. Prior to this project I probably wouldn't have been disturbed at all. I didn't say anything to the kids. I just kept reading, but when we discussed the book I went back to that page and I read it to them again. Then I said look at this picture. I asked them to react to it. At first they were reacting very positively to the colors. It is a gorgeous picture. Then I asked "Does anything bother you about this picture?" Without any further prompting, one of my kids raised his hand and said "It doesn't match the text because the text says this is a run down, old log house and this picture looks like this log house is brand new, freshly painted."

During a study seminar in April 1991 the teachers engaged in the following discourse about their students' growth in understanding and appreciation of book illustrations.

> Teacher 2: I think the kids [in grade one] are more aware of how the pictures go with the text. I don't think they ever gave that much thought before, and now they're keying in on this.
>
> Teacher 4: Sometimes the kids [in grade one] say that they wish that the pictures were in color [because] they don't like black and white stuff. They would rather have color.
>
> Teacher 7: They're also looking at whether the pictures agree with the text or don't agree. The kids [in grade three] are very critical. They will indicate if they notice that the illustration doesn't seem to reflect what the text is saying or that there's an obvious error.
>
> Teacher 1: Just today one of my students said that the story was saying she [the character] was strong and the artist [didn't make her look strong]. This was in kindergarten.
>
> Teacher 10: I think [my grade-four students] now look at a picture book with different eyes. They don't think picture books are for babies or for little kids. They know that there are some beautiful picture books that have lots of detail or that they just set a

> wonderful mood. I think the children have learned to appreciate picture books.

Teachers continued to comment on the students' increased interest and knowledge about book illustrations through the end of the second year of this study. This is evidenced in the following statement made by Teacher 7 in late May 1992.

> The students in this particular class [grade three] are real clear as far as the illustrations in books and there are a lot of kids in this particular group who think like artists. They will spend a lot of time discussing the media used by the illustrators. Some of them know far more than I do. Some of them will choose to read books because of the illustrations in them.

In connection with the unit on children as victims of war, Teacher 11 read Margaret Wild's picture book Let the Celebrations Begin, which is about women in a concentration camp during World War II secretly making toys out of their own ragged clothing for their children. She asked her grade-five students how Julie Vivas's illustrations helped them grasp the significance of the situation described in the book. After examining Julie Vivas's surrealistic illustrations, Matt wrote,

> The illustrations in this book told more than the book. They really showed the hurt and the pain. They also showed the happiness when they were rescued [from the concentration camp.]

Jennifer evaluated the illustrations in the same book as follows:

> The pictures went excellent with the text, like where it said that the moms are now giving the children the dolls, it showed a wonderful illustration on what was really happening and how the children were feeling at that point of time [sic] in their life. It's like a change [in] what was happening. They were probably feeling much better and relieved [when the soldiers came to free them].

Using the criteria to evaluate the quality of the illustrations in an illustrated book, the grade-five students were asked to examine the text and the pictures in Sharon Bell Mathis's book The Hundred Penny Box which is illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon. Each student chose an illustration which

he/she particularly liked and explained the reasons for his/her choice. Jennifer chose the picture depicting Michael's mother reminding him about an old torn-up stuffed bear he used to have. In the background the illustration shows the image the boy created in his mind of the stuffed bear he used to have. Jennifer explained her choice this way:

> The reason I like this picture is it's so bright. Not bright light, but bright in thought. I love the idea of how the illustrator puts in what the person is thinking. The picture also goes so good with the text.

Latoya chose the picture depicting Michael listening to great-great Aunt Dew singing her song. Her reason for choosing that picture was

> Michael and great-great Aunt Dew are together holding each other.... Michael loves his Aunt Dew a lot because he stood up for her.
>
> It is a very good picture. It has a lot of detail in it. She really looks old. Her face makes it look so realistic like a real aunt would look like. She or he [the illustrators, Leo and Diane Dillon] really put effort into this picture. You see all the weaknesses [of the characters] inside this picture and how Michael holds her in a loving way.
>
> I would give this book a red ribbon!

Consideration of the elements of fiction. Just as the students demonstrated a growth in interest and understanding of book illustrations, they also revealed increased understanding and knowledge about the style and techniques used by authors to develop tone, mood, characterization, and so on.

Since believability is one of the primary elements of fiction, the students in grade five were asked to consider the believability of the ending of Monkey Island a modern realistic fiction novel by Paula Fox. Kathy wrote, "I think it's so believable that it sounds like it's her [Paula Fox) life and like she puts Clay's name in instead of hers." But in contrast, Mike wrote, "I think this ending is not possible, because I don't think that Buddy would be able to get a job."

Matt wrote,

> Today was not the best ending there could have been, but it was alright [sic]. There were some real feelings shown between Clay and his mother, Clay and Buddy, and even Clay and Sophie [his new baby sister]. So everybody made up and everybody found each other except for Clay's dad and they should try to find him. Yes, it is possible because the conversation could have went [sic] on.

The author's style and use of language are other elements of fiction which the grade-five students began to think about when studying author's techniques. Tom made the following comment about the style of writing in Monkey Island,

> I liked the way Paula Fox describes Clay's feelings. He was feeling sad and you could tell that by the kid [Clay's roommate in the hospital] said he was going home, and Clay has no home to go to. You can also tell he was tired and weak by the way he was acting towards the other kid in the room.

During a study seminar in April 1991, a number of teachers engaged in a discourse about their observations of their students in relation to the aspects of response mentioned above.

> Teacher 9: I think that there's some sense of paying attention to what the author does in terms of developing the characters and involving the reader. Making the character or the situation or the event so real that you want to get into the book. You want to help [the characters] out. You want to tell them [the characters] what's going on.
>
> Teacher 10: I think the [grade-four] students are trying to think about the techniques that the author uses, because we tend to ask them questions about authors and the way the author did [a specific thing]. So they [the students] are using different language. Whether they did it before or not, we are looking at that differently. We're also looking at the children differently.
>
> Teacher 12: I think the thing that's exciting for me is to have the kids say something like the author did this or that in the book. It comes right from them [grade-five students]. It could be about how the author depicted a setting or how the author developed a character through the entire story. The students will notice that. They will even correct me on something. One time while reading a story I thought a character had disappeared from the story never to come back. My student said no, the main character in the story kept thinking about that character and kept bringing him up. So, although the character never appeared physically again, he was still in the story. It's exciting to see kids do that. I see kids thinking

critically about why an author would do something, like why the author mentioned something at a certain time in the book and not later or earlier.

Teacher 7: When I read a mystery story my kids [grade three] discovered that all of the little things that happened in the story just didn't fit together until the end. So they have become more aware that they need to think about the whole story not just little parts of it. They're also more aware of how the author develops a character through dialogue. The way the characters talk about things, talk to and about other people. They are more aware how all of those little things help the reader get to know the character.

Pat C: That tends to be a result of the kinds of questions you have asked. That kind of thinking seldom happens even with an adult unless their attention is brought to it. That's good.

Teacher 7: But I don't know if my students are doing it on their own.

Pat C: No, probably they are not. That's because you are asking them something about what the dialogue tells them about the character or what the descriptive passage tells them.

Teacher 9: That's OK. Our kids are at a different stage. Think how much farther ahead they are now than they were at the beginning of the year or previous classes when we never asked those things. When I listen to my kids [grade-four students] debate, I ask one question and I'll have kids that will sit there and talk back and forth among themselves about their perceptions of what the author was doing. They'll talk for five minutes.

Teacher 8: They disagree with each other. They'll say I don't think that the character was that way or did that because of this or this.

Teacher 9: And they'll go back to the book for their proof.

Learning about the characteristics of different genres. Like any other type of art, each kind of literature has both form and structure. In order to advance the students' understanding of literature as art some of the teachers engaged in direct instruction about the characteristics of the genre they were reading.

During the 1990-1991 school year the grade-four students in Teacher 10's classroom studied the characteristics of each genre after they read a literary selection from that genre. The last genre that they studied that year was

biography/autobiography. This particular focus was a result of the students' very positive and enthusiastic response to Beverly Cleary's Ramona and Her Father. As a result Teacher 10 decided to read excerpts from Beverly Cleary's full-length autobiography The Girl From Yamhill.

> I zeroed in on the things that would help us understand why she would write a book like Ramona and Her Father. Some of the kids could actually see that Beverly Cleary is kind of a bitter woman who really does not like her mother at all. The children wondered how she could write such a warm, loving story where you have this ideal family life and she obviously didn't. Or at least in her mind she didn't have an ideal family life.

Then Teacher 10 asked the children to pretend they were Beverly Cleary's mother and she was writing a biography about Beverly Cleary. She reported that the children thoroughly enjoyed this activity. When they shared their biographies written from the mother's perspective, "some of the students even took on a crackly old voice of what they thought Beverly Cleary's mother would sound like." One of the students wrote "Now, my daughter is really headstrong and won't listen to a thing I say."

Teacher 10 also gave book talks about other autobiographies written by authors and illustrators of children's books, and read A Self-Portrait: Trina Schart Hyman, a picture book autobiography, to her students. She also read some picture books illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman because they were mentioned in her autobiography and the students expressed an interest in seeing some of Trina Schart Hyman's other books. The classroom library included an extensive collection of biographies/autobiographies of interest to grade-four students: authors and illustrators of children's books, political figures, sports personalities, television and movie stars, and so on. These books consisted of a wide range of reading levels to accommodate independent reading. The students were asked to read at least one biography/autobiography of their choice and a number of them read several.

All of the students had to critique one selection in terms of the characteristics of the genre which they identified as a group after hearing Self-Portrait: Trina Schart Hyman and the excerpts from The Girl From Yamhill. For the activity described below, Teacher 10 asked the students to focus on one characteristic in particular: the author should tell about both the strengths and weaknesses of the subject of the biography/autobiography. The students prepared oral presentations in which they reported how well the author did or did not meet this characteristic. Doug wrote his report from the perspective of a reporter.

> Doug: This is Malcolm Little here with Arnold Adams. Mr. Adams, I say you did a great job on telling [my] strengths, but not so well on telling [my] weaknesses. I think Mr. Cooper did a nice job of making pictures to go with the setting. Maybe even you could have told a story with just looking at the pictures, and I still think that Mr. Adams did a very good job of writing the story.
>
> Teacher 10: Tell me about Malcolm X. Why did someone want to write a book about him?
>
> Doug: Because he tried to help black people not to be slaves, like Martin Luther King did.
>
> Teacher 10: How did he do that?
>
> Doug: In the book he [the author] said he joined the Muslims of Islam and told them how he was being treated, that he couldn't be a lawyer. His teachers said he couldn't be a lawyer like he wanted to be.
>
> Teacher 10: So he felt prejudices against him?
>
> Doug: Yeah
>
> Teacher 10: Was this book a complete biography or a partial biography.
>
> Doug: It should be a complete biography, but it didn't tell all that was [known] about him, so it is partial.

Peggy assumed the role of Trina Schart Hyman in her presentation.

> Peggy: Hello, I'm Trina Schart Hyman. I think I did a very good job telling [some] parts of my life. I told you my weaknesses and my strengths. One of my weaknesses was when I was young I was afraid of everything that talked or moved. I was afraid of people, all people, even my own family. I was a terrible student. Some of my strengths

were, like when I was three or four my mother was reading my favorite story, "Little Red Riding Hood," and I learned how to read it. I pretended I was Little Red Riding Hood for a year. My mother even sewed my own red cape. When I was pregnant I had visions of a shy little daughter who would stand by my drawing board and keep me company. My daughter Katrine was not shy. She was born screaming her head off in 1963.

Teacher 10: Was this a complete or a partial biography?

Peggy: Partial

Teacher 10: Why would you say that?

Peggy: Because she is not dead yet.

During the Spring of 1992, Teacher 9's grade-four students read a considerable number of legends. In an individual conference she reported that after this experience,

> the children were able to come up with their own set of characteristics of legends. First, that a legend is something that was orally passed down from generation to generation and then written down, and that it probably has a variety of forms because it was oral. Second, that there's an element of something supernatural or something that is a phenomena that is explained in a legend. They came up with four but I can only remember two. They were trying to differentiate a legend from any other kind of reading and writing that they'd had. I wouldn't think that fourth graders a couple or three years ago would have understood what it means to come up with characteristics that differentiate a legend from something else. So I think there's an awful lot of learning that's gone on.

To help students learn how to identify the characteristics of different genres, all of the grade-five teachers, Teacher 11, Teacher 12, and Teacher 18, asked them to compare picture books and novels about children as victims of war. At the same time the teachers asked the children to compare how the authors used information about World War II in their novels and picture books to show that individuals responded in different ways to aspects of this historical event. For example, one group of students compared the novel The Upstairs Room by Johanna Reiss with several picture books including Rose Blanche by Roberto Innocenti and Let the Celebrations Begin by Margaret Wild.

Another group of students compared the novel The House of Sixty Fathers by Meindert De Jong with numerous picture books, two of which were Hiroshima No Pika by Toshi Maruki and My Hiroshima written and illustrated by Junko Morimoto. The remaining group of students compared the novel Snow Treasure by Marie McSwigan with the picture books My Daddy Was A Soldier by Deborah Kogan Ray, and Let the Celebrations Begin.

In connection with the study of the characteristics of fantasy, Teacher 7 discovered that she needed to teach her grade-three students about the broader categories of literature, specifically fiction and nonfiction. During the lesson which occurred on the day after the students finished reading the transitional novel, My Father's Dragon written by Ruth S. Gannett and illustrated by Ruth C. Gannett, Teacher 7 asked the students to identify its genre. My Father's Dragon is a combination of fanciful fiction and the adventures of a small boy who befriended an old alley cat who told him the story of the captive baby dragon on Wild Island. Subsequently, the boy decided to rescue the baby dragon and in the process encountered several wild animals. One will observe when reading the transcript below that at the very least the students did not know the difference between nonfiction and fiction and they seemed to be equating nonfiction with realism and fiction with fantasy. Because of this apparent lack of understanding the teacher changed the focus of the lesson. The following is a abridgment of the whole class discussion.

Teacher 7: What kind of book is it?

Student: It's a little bit of fiction and it's a little bit of non because in the story you could find an alley cat and you could bring it home.

Teacher 7: So that part could be what?

Student: The first part could by fiction.

Teacher 7: What do you mean be fiction? I guess we need to clear that up. To make sure we all know what you mean by fiction and nonfiction.

Student: Fiction means fairy tale.

Teacher 7: Fiction means just fairy tale? What does fiction mean?

At this point the teacher opened the discussion to the whole group.

Student: It's like it's not real.

Teacher 7: Fiction isn't real? OK

Student: And nonfiction is real. It's a true story. And a little kid couldn't survive all those animals.

Student: Animals don't really talk. They can't really chew gum.

Teacher 7: So that part would go under the fiction or the nonfiction?

Student: Fiction.

Teacher 7: OK, Nonfiction is real. But remember that word we talked about earlier? Informational. It's like facts. Kevin, think about that book you have been reading and using when you were doing your writing. Would you call that fiction or nonfiction?

Student: Nonfiction because it's about real life and animals and what they do and how they do it.

Teacher 7: So it's an informational book. It's got facts about real animals. Can you think of an animal book that you've read that would be fiction?

Student: Lon Po Po [Young, 1989]

Teacher 7: OK, That had an animal in it and it was not real. But fiction is a bigger category.

Student: Fiction makes you believe it. It could be real.

Teacher 7: A lot of you were saying fairy tales. Are fairy tales true?

Students (Several students talking at once) Sometimes. NO! Maybe

Student: (With great emphasis) If it's a fairy tale it is not true!!!

Teacher 7: Alright, but a fairy tale is also part of fiction. I guess I blew it, I thought that we had talked about the difference between fiction and nonfiction. I thought you already knew this.

More discussion about fairy tales ensued.

Teacher 7: You just said a good word, Marie. Realistic. What does realistic mean?

Marie: It means it's fiction.

Student: It means it is kind of real

Student: This story [My Father's Dragon] could be fantasy.

Teacher 7: Are you saying that the opposite of realistic, where it may be true or real is fantasy? So if you were going to choose realistic or fantasy, what would My Father's Dragon be and why?

Student: Fantasy because animals can't talk.

Student: This story could be real, but not the characters are real. Like the dragons and stuff because I don't think dragons are in this world.

Student: It can't be realistic because realistic means that it can happen but it probably won't.

Teacher 7: Good for you.

Student: It's unlikely to happen.

Student: I think it's fantasy because the animals couldn't really eat stuff like that. The alligators wouldn't really eat lollipops and tigers wouldn't chew gum.

Teacher 7: Those are all good reasons why it is a fantasy.

At this point Teacher 7 decided the children realized that My Father's Dragon is fanciful fiction and went on to examine the techniques the author used to develop the book characters.

This lesson demonstrates a teacher's ability to alter her lesson plan when she truly listened to what the children were saying. Teacher 7's willingness and ability to recognize that her students did not understand these two basic concepts about literature led to her decision to reteach them. It appears that she recognizes that children must understand both of these

basic literary concepts in order to engage in critical aesthetic response to literature.

Unique artistry of authors and illustrators. One of our goals was to encourage the students to become acquainted with and learn to enjoy all kinds of quality literature and to encourage an appreciation and preference for quality literature. In the past two years when we had accomplished creators of truly quality children's literature meet with the students, we noted a broadening of the students' interest and enjoyment of reading different kinds of literature, especially in the kinds of literature created by those persons who visited our school. The students better understood and acquired a keener appreciation for the process of creative writing, especially the diverse approaches one needs to take when writing different kinds of literature written by these visiting author and the author/illustrator. The students (as well as their parents and teachers!) gained in their critical aesthetic appreciation and respect for the unique artistry and the literary contributions of people who create literature in general and for children in particular. Several teachers reported different ways the visits of creators of children's books influenced their students.

After author Carol Carrick spent the day at our school in February 1991, Teacher 2 had the following conversation with her grade-one students.

> The other day I asked the children if we could have an author come next year would they want the same author to come? Brandi said, "No, I'd want a different one to come." When I asked her why, she said she would like to see how another author has developed her writing so that she could compare that author with Carol Carrick. She said [she wanted] to see if they were alike at all or if they weren't. I was really surprised, and thought that was a really good response.

Shortly after Carol Carrick's visit to the school, one of Teacher 8's students wrote the following essay.

> I wish to be a children's book author and illustrater [sic] when I grow up. I think it will be fun, I love to write stories and I'm

only nine. I don't know why I like to write stories, I guess I was just born to hold a pencil. I like to write about cat's [sic], children, and mysteries. I like to get the people excited. I think when I grow up I'll go to school for a few years and then I guess I'll just start writing. I love to write!

Further evidence of the impact of the Literature Study on the teachers and students at Blaine School was seen in the results of the visit of award-winning children's literature author/illustrator, Pat Cummings in February 1992. Throughout the month prior to Cummings's visit to the school, each of the teachers directed a critical study of selected children's books by this accomplished African American author/illustrator. That the students could apply the knowledge and understanding of critical aesthetic response to literature they had learned during the course of this study was demonstrated in children's responses to Cummings's books in their visual interpretive projects, their written activities, their thoroughly engrossed attention during her large-group presentations in the auditorium, the nature and quality of the questions they asked when she visited each of the classrooms, the many students (and parents) who attended her presentation in the evening session, the quantity of this author's books which the students purchased for their personal libraries, and the many spontaneous letters individual students wrote to her after her visit to our school (and the excitement that resulted when they shared the very warm and friendly letters she sent to each correspondent in return). The teachers said many times over during the months after Cummings's visit to Blaine, that it provided one of the most effective means (1) to promote a keener interest in literature as an art form, (2) to help the students, teachers, and parents to realize and appreciate the amount and kind of work, thinking, knowledge, and creative accomplishment that goes into creating quality literature for children, (3) to provide the students with the relatively rare privilege of meeting and actually talking with the person who

created the book(s) they read and enjoyed, (4) to help students to gain critical aesthetic appreciation and respect for the artistic literary contributions of people from diverse cultures, and (5) to serve as a role model of a minority person who has succeeded as a professional artist and has also been the recipient of several distinguished awards for excellence in book illustrating.

During Pat Cummings's presentation to the students and teachers of Blaine School, she told stories about her family and drew pictures which depicted her childhood experiences. She demonstrated how she used these experiences in her writing and in her illustrations. When commenting about her visit Teacher 1 said,

> I want children to know that authors and illustrators are people who started out just like they did. They were little kids once too. That is where Pat Cummings came in so handy this year. She made that so clear when she talked to the students about the way she drew pictures when she was young.
>
> One of my [kindergarten] students, who has not liked school very much, was so looking forward to Pat Cummings's visit. We went down to meet her and this child stood there with his mouth hanging open the entire time. He saw her come into the room and I happened to be sitting near him. He turned around and yanked on my pant leg, so I bent down to see what he wanted. He said, "Is that her?" "Yes it is. That is Pat Cummings." From that moment on, the whole time she talked, he was silent. Probably one of the few times he has been silent all year. To me that made it all worthwhile. The whole cost of Pat Cummings's trip was worth it, to see his reaction to her.

After reading all of Pat Cummings's picture books, those she illustrated and those she wrote and illustrated, Teacher 5 had her grade-two students write letters to Pat Cummings which were then gathered in a booklet. One of the students presented it to Pat Cummings when she visited their classroom. The three letters presented below reveal that each of these students is at a different stage of recognizing, or at least verbalizing, their impressions of an author/illustrator's artistic talent and craftsmanship.

Dear Pat Cummings,

You're a great illustrator and we read some of your books. My favorite book is Clean Your Room, Harvey Moon.

Your friend,
Jessica

Dear Pat Cummings,

I like your books because of the illustrations. You include only parts of pictures in your illustrations in your books. That is why I like your books. My favorite book is Clean Your Room, Harvey Moon.

Your friend,
Douglas

Dear Pat Cummings,

I like the book about Clean Your Room, Harvey Moon because of the ending. When you show the rug with humps it looks funny at the end. I like your colorful illustrations and your writing! I wonder if you are writing another book?

Your friend,
Julie

Teacher 10 had her grade-four students write about their impressions of Pat Cummings's visit. During an individual conference she commented,

> The children wrote some really touching things after Pat Cummings came. Some black children had finally seen a role model. Some of them said they were so excited they couldn't sleep the night before because they were going to meet a real live author. A lot of the kids got her autograph in the books they bought. They actually got to see her as a real fun person who could tell jokes, a person who had created the stories they had read. She talked about writing and rewriting, not being happy with the first draft. I think if children hear that from somebody who is writing books then they'll be a little more willing to rewrite.

Two of the grade-four students' responses to Pat Cummings's visit are cited below. Samantha wrote

> When Pat Cummings came [to] our school she wasn't what I expexted [sic]. I expexed [sic] her to be just another boring author. But when we went down to the gym for the asembely [sic] she made us laugh and she drew one of her ballarenas [sic] for us. She [also] made a picture like it was a page in one of her books.
>
> When she came to our classroom she made us laugh and sighned [sic] our book[s]. She was nice and asked funny quastions [sic] when she sighned [sic] books. I liked Pat Cummings!!

Pat Cummings's impact on Henry was evident.

> I felt real happy before she came because I was going to meet a black illustratur [sic] in person and I never new [sic] there was a female black illustratur [sic]. When she got here I had got real excited because she was coming I was going to meet her in person and get her attugraph [sic].
>
> Now that I am taking drawing lessons I can be just like her.

Teacher 11's grade-five students' written responses to the prompt "Memories I Wish to Keep about Pat Cummings's Visit" reflect their judgments about her as a person, as an author, and as an illustrator. Courtney's memories were expressed in the following narrative.

> How warm she is! She didn't get tense and knew what to say. The way she is open. She told things that she said that people told her not to tell. I liked her personal stories. They were very interesting.
>
> I liked her pictures. From her pictures I learned how to make things look very far away. She drew a moon (the ones with faces, you know, moons that have noses, play moons.) It was so So [student emphasis] very good.
>
> I will never forget her books. How realistic they are, so detailed. Like in Clean Your Room, Harvey Moon, it's so much like a cartoon. Then in Storm in the Night, it's so serious. She can make so many different faces. She doesn't draw a black man that looks white or a white man that looks black. I am so very glad that she came.

Other grade-five students responded to hearing how an accomplished literary artist approached her work. Their thoughts are demonstrated in the examples which follow. Kathy wrote,

> Right after I saw her drawing and telling us that illustrating and writing was fun, I had the urge to draw. I admire Pat Cummings very much, and I hope I see her again sometime because I want to learn to draw like her.
>
> I am going to buy some crayons and paper and make a book. I always thought about being an illustrator or an artist, but now I know I want to be one.

And Karen wrote,

> I know that she inspired so many little and older kids, especially my little sister. She told me that she was going to make books when she was older.

Teacher 12 commented about the impact of an author's visit on his grade-five students.

> I wish we could share the author/illustrator's visit with more schools than just at our school because the kids find out that its a human being that's doing the writing. This year it was because that human being was so human. It's so valuable to the kids, and probably more so for our group [grade five] because a lot of them are good illustrators. They really can draw. Pat Cummings's visit left them thinking, "Hey, maybe I can be an illustrator." Since she is also now writing books, [they are also thinking] "Well, I can illustrate and if I can illustrate I can probably write."

During a study seminar in April, 1992, Teacher 2 recalled another incident which shows the impact of an author visit.

> I asked the [grade one] children to brainstorm some questions that they would like to ask the author of the book we had just read. We were going to pretend that the author was sitting in our classroom. I'm sure if I had done this before we had an author come to our school, the children would not have had any idea of where to begin with something like this, and I don't know if I would even have known how to approach them about this. They came up with over a half a dozen questions which I don't think would ever have happened if we hadn't done this when preparing for the authors' visits. One of my girls thought the author of the book we had just read was actually coming to our school. She was convinced that this author was going to be sitting there on a chair the next day. I had to convince her that the author wasn't really coming. That's good for the students to think of the author as being a real person who might have some answers or to think about what to ask an author.

There are other ways besides having an author or illustrator physically come to the school that students can meet authors and illustrators to learn how they go about creating books of merit. One way is to show a videotape of the author or illustrator talking about the ways he/she approaches writing or illustrating children's books. For example, after the grade-five students read the award winning autobiographical novel <u>The Upstairs Room</u> by Johanna Reiss they viewed a videotape recording of the speech she presented at Michigan State University a few years earlier. Viewing the tape appeared to help the students understand further that authors are real people, and also

gave them insights about how she approached writing this book. After viewing this video recording of Ms. Reiss, Megan wrote,

> I feel she is right. If children do not learn about the Holocaust, it will be forgotten and might happen again. After adults [who have lived through the event] pass away, who will know about it if they didn't learn about it as a child?
>
> Johanna did a sensational job of making you understand what happened to her during World War II. She was very brave to write it down for many people to remember.
>
> It is very hard to bring back memories.
>
> She made a good decision to write a book about it. Let it be known.
>
> She described very well what it was like being a Jewish child during World War II and how scary it was.

The study of critical aesthetic response to literature influenced teachers as well as students. During the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1991) Teacher 8 reported that because she studied critical aesthetic response to literature she had become much more aware of the distinctive characteristics in the work of individual authors and illustrators.

> I think one of the [new] realizations for me was the author's words and how the author really molds those words to form the character. I've read for years. I just would read and not really think about how those words went together and how, through those words, I really got to know the author, or the illustrator, or the characters, or the setting. I guess even though I had read for years, I would be carried away with the story line. When I really stopped and thought about it during this study I realized there is something they [the authors and illustrators] are really trying to accomplish. They pick and choose their words. To portray the moods of the story, the illustrators pick and choose their colors. I guess I had just gone through the motions for years, and all of a sudden this year I really could see that those are all there for a reason. I was at a different level [before], a very, very simple level and I feel like I've gotten deeper into [thinking about literature] by looking at literature in this way and trying to help my kids do the same.

To alert the students to the author's unique use of language, Teacher 7 read Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie written by Peter and Connie Roop and illustrated by Peter E. Hanson and Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter written by Arielle North Olson and illustrated by Elaine Wentworth. The two books are basically the same story, but Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie is an easy to

read illustrated book, whereas The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter is a quality picture book which clearly demonstrated expert use of language. The teacher read these books to the children over a two-day span. She gave the students a page of text from each book and had them meet in small groups of three. She asked the children to compare the language each author used to describe the same incident. After about 10 minutes the teacher brought the students back together to share their observations of how each author used language to tell essentially the same story.

Teacher 7: I want to know if you noticed any difference in the books.

Student: I noticed that Keep the Lights Burning Abbie was more of a children's book than The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter because it used less words and it didn't have as much detail of how the story went. You really couldn't finish this book [The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter] in one day. You'd probably really want to put a bookmark in it and finish it the next day.

Teacher 7: Why?

Student: You get a lot of suspense in it and it's not as much of a children's book as [Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie]).

Student: The words in Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie are bigger (The student was referring to the size of the print). There's not as much detail. I mean they just have short sentences. [The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter] has more detail.

Student: The words are easier in [Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie].

Teacher 7: What about the picture in your mind, which one is it clearer in?

Student: Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie because the words are easier to understand.

Teacher 7: So for you reading yourself is that one easier?

Student: Yeah, because I tried. I read this [The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter] and I had trouble on a lot of words.

Teacher 7: OK, which one did you enjoy hearing the most?

Students together: The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter and Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie.

In a follow-up discussion with the teacher the next day, she stated that she and the children had continued the discussion after lunch and there seemed to be a majority of the children who agreed that if the teacher was going to read the book to them they preferred The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter because it had more detail, more complications, and was more interesting. However, if they were going to read the book themselves they would choose Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie because the words were easier to read.

Development of Individual Literary Taste and Preference

Our task as educators is to help students to think about the quality of the literature they read, to help them learn to think not only about what images an author's writing creates, but what the storymaker or the poet did to create these images and how effectively the images were created. As they engage in this process and share the images they create, students will soon learn that each person creates somewhat different images and that these differences must be acknowledged and valued by both teachers and students. This knowledge of the differences in imaging then leads to students recognizing that some people like a particular story and some do not. Diversity in students' acceptance or rejection of a story, or liking it or disliking it, should also be recognized as an appropriate response and is an aspect of the development of individual literary taste and preference.

An important aspect of critical aesthetic response to literature is for the reader to become aware that some people like a particular story and some do not and that each reader may have a different reason for liking it or disliking it. Teacher 12 asked his students to write whether or not they liked Gray Boy by Jim Arnosky. The three responses below show that these grade-five students are becoming aware of their own and other readers'

preferences for this particular literary selection. John's statement clearly identifies his reasons for disliking this story.

> We read Gray Boy and I really didn't like it. It got good in the middle and then it got boring. It didn't talk down to me but it was not my kind of book. I don't like animal books. I like books thats [sic] funny and has [sic] action. When Gray Boy turned wild was my kind of book [but] when they switched back to Ian it was boring.

Mary Sue's response appears to demonstrate her ability to accept someone else's opinion even when it differs from hers.

> I didn't really enjoy the book that much; because at times it would get really nasty; like when Gray Boy got ripped up by the fisher and he layed in the snow and he had a blood puddle under him. I don't really like books with nasty things and alot [sic] of blood involved; So it wasn't exactly the best book for me.

In order for children to feel free to dislike a book the teacher has chosen to share with them, the teacher must not only accept but encourage open discussions about students' personal preferences. Students must know that as long as they can support their statements, it is permissible to have their own opinions.

Jessica's opinion is very different from that of her peers.

> I think the book Gray Boy was a good animal modern realistic fiction book because it had all the things it needed to have except its surpose [sic] to have one main charater [sic] but it has two main charaters [sic] in it. There was Ian and Gray Boy but it was still a good book.... Personally I thought it was at some parts boring and some parts really good. Another thing that made it a good book was that it always at the end of a chapter left you wondering what would happen next. At the end of the book it was really sad to me, I guess because of the way they said how Gray Boy died and because of the sad ending. I don't usually like books with real sad endings because to me it ruins the book. I don't no [sic] how other people feel about Gray Boy but I think it is sad because it is about animals dieing [sic].

It is not uncommon for children, in fact all readers, to respond differently to various parts of a story. Jessica seems unable to make an overall judgement about Gray Boy. Again, teachers must allow students to

respond to the story in their own ways, even when the students seem to be uncertain about their feelings or reactions to the story.

Children should be aware that they are developing their own individual literary tastes and preferences. In order to do this, it is essential for students to understand what facets of the story appeal to them more than others, for example, the topic of the story, the structure of the plot, the style of writing, the genre. To promote this understanding Teacher 11 frequently asked the following questions: Did you like the ending of this book? Why or why not? If you were the author, what would you have done differently? If yes how would you have done it? If not why not? Two of her grade-five students responded to these questions after having read Monkey Island, which is a modern realistic novel about a dysfunctional family. Karen wrote in her journal:

> I am upset at the ending, because I don't like it when books leave you hanging. I would have changed it. I would have [written] another chapter and wouldn't have the readers hanging at the end. I did like the book a lot. I wonder if there is a sequel to Monkey Island? I think this ending is very possible. A boy can be homeless, go to a foster home, and then find his mother. The reason I think it is possible, is because my mother is a caseworker at the probate court. She works with neglected and abused children.

Jennifer wrote the following in her journal:

> I don't really like the way this story ended. I really wish Clay would had [sic] found his dad. This story just kind of left off just like if you stop in the middle of the book. (The underscoring of this statement was done by the student.) If Paula Fox would had [sic] done one thing different I wish she would have made Clay find his dad and then his dad would find a job and they would move into a small house and live the rest of their lives happy. But, I really think that this was an excellent book! And I would like to read another book similar to this book.

Students show signs of developing individual preferences when they begin to request books on the same topic or theme, or books created by authors and/or illustrators whose books they have read before. During the

end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1992) Teacher 3, who consistently observed her grade-one students during their regular library periods, reported that

> When we go to the library, the children will ask for books that have been read in the classroom. "I want to take this book home to share with mom and dad." When the kids are turning in books, we have kids watching what the others are bringing back so they can get that book. They race to get it. The books don't even get put back on the shelves. It is very good that these kids have been introduced to materials that they are really interested in.

Teacher 3 also related an incident which occurred during the school book fair Spring 1992.

> I think there is a relationship between what we are doing with literature in the classroom and what the kids buy at the book fair. In fact, there was a kid in tears because he thought a book he really wanted would not be there the next day because there were only two copies of it left and his mother didn't have the money with her to buy him the book. He knew exactly what he wanted. He would not leave. I took the book and set it aside and said that he could bring the money the next day. What we're doing with literature in the classroom has had a great impact on children. It is wonderful to see that children at such an early age are beginning to really get into books. I truly believe that through this experience, children will be lifelong readers and interested in good materials.
>
> One of the little boys in my room is an excellent reader, and he will go to the shelf and will pick books that he can read to other children. I can see him even trying to ask questions that I have asked. He will practice on other kids.

Teacher 4, another grade-one teacher, commented during the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1992) that

> I think my students have developed a preference for quality literature. When I see a book on the Trumpet Book Club order that's one of our authors or something we've read, I've said "If mom says she can only buy one book you might like to have this book." And it really does happen, and I really don't remember them doing this before. And they'll always ask if the book I read is in the library and want to know if they can check it out. So, they're interested. They are thrilled when they can come back from the library and they have a book that's already been read to them.

Teacher 16, who worked part time in the library shared this incident during the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1991).

> I have one third-grade girl who asked me to recommend some books, so I started trying to give her books that I knew were good books. I gave her <u>The Bears' House</u> by Marilyn Sachs and the girl said, "Oh,

she's the best author in the whole world." She chose another book by Marilyn Sachs. She also came in and asked for The Whipping Boy by Sid Fleicshman. Even though her class is reading it together, she wanted to read it on her own. So she's an avid reader. I feel like that was one thing that was starting to happen, kids who are avid readers are asking me to recommend more books.

When students in Teacher 11's grade-five class were asked if they would like to read another book similar to The Upstairs Room, Ginny wrote:

> I would. This book is really good and it can be upsetting. Most people would think war is just fighting, but it is not. War is about people and their problems. I like to read about that. Annie's problem is that she is Jewish. Here Sini [Annie's teenage sister] is worried about how she looks and Annie is worried if the war is going to end or if she would turn herself in. The book makes me want to read more about it. I was sad that the book ended when it did.

Teachers have also reported that they have become more discriminating and interested in selecting quality literature for use with their students. Teacher 2 attested late in the Spring 1992,

> After teaching as long as I have, you just have piles and piles of your own books. When I go back to look at some of those now, I wonder why I ever got them because I've really gotten to appreciate the good literature that's out there from the exposure I have had through this study. I analyze the illustrations and try to see if they are appropriate for the content. I know I didn't do that before. I do this with the kids, too. They are starting to do some comparing of illustrators and they weren't doing that before either. Now we're both growing together.

Relationship Between Literature and Other Subject Areas

The tables detailing the varied uses of literature (Tables 4 & 5) display the curricular connections the teachers reported having made in 1990-1991 and 1991-1992. Most of the teachers who participated in this study integrated literature and other curricular areas. For example, Teacher 5 and Teacher 6 integrated literature with the study of Africa; Teacher 2, Teacher 3, and Teacher 4 integrated literature in their study of farm animals and dinosaurs; Teacher 7 and Teacher 8 integrated literature and map reading and drawing skills; Teacher 9 and Teacher 10 integrated literature with the study of

Native Americans; and Teacher 11 and Teacher 12 integrated literature and the study of medieval times.

Because of limited space we will only cite examples from Teacher 5 and Teacher 11. Teacher 5 chose to teach persuasive writing through book talks modeled after Reading Rainbow book talks. The children read Mary Calhoun's Hot Air Henry, Cross Country Cat, and High-Wire Henry. Teacher 5 taught the characteristics of persuasive writing, and the children had to use those characteristics in their writing and/or their talks. At the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1991) Teacher 5 described this integrated lesson.

> I told the students [in grade two] they were the sales people and their assignment was to come up with something to convince other children to read this series of books, or to convince other teachers to use it in their classrooms. They had kind of carte blanche because I didn't give a specific assignment. We brainstormed ways to do it and then they worked like troopers for two weeks. Some kids did posters. Some filled a box with visuals related to the stories. Some did a filmstrip like thing and presented that. They all either talked about or read what they had written. I could hardly get them away from it even in their personal choice time. I finally had to cut it off or I think they would have kept working on it because they wanted to do more than one. They just went nuts over it.

Three book talks written by the children are presented below exactly as they wrote them. Dustin drew a poster showing Henry in the hot-air balloon as it is just lifting off the ground. He wrote the following to read when he presented his book talk.

> you should read Hot AIR HenRY because he is a funey cat and he is smort he thinks like a persin and the illustrations go with the writting.

Suzanne drew a poster for her book talk on Cross Country Cat. The picture shows Henry sitting outside in the tulips (The story actually takes places during the heart of winter with a lot of snow on the ground.) Henry has a bubble over his head thinking "My family left without me! Will I ever see

them again? I know, I'll get on my cross-country skis and catch up with them!" She wrote,

> Cross Country Cat is a good book and it is special. It has great illustrations. Henry thinks like people and he goes cross country skiing to try to find his family who left him behind. To find out if Henry finds his family, Read Cross Country Cat!

Fred drew a poster consisting of three panels, one for each book in the series. Each panel has the title of the book and a picture of Henry engaged in an activity unique to that book. He wrote,

> Well I want to introduce you to a cat named Henry with a humorous mind. Henry thinks like a person. The books have lots of detail in the stories. Boy you should read three great adventures! You should also look at the pictures they're great! Also you should see the cat act! The stories are fantasy! And if you want to find out what happens in these 3 adventures, read them!

Teacher 11, a grade-five teacher, described how she made connections between literature and art in a Spring 1991 study seminar.

> It was really interesting when we went to the Detroit Institute of Art in April 1991. When we came back, I used some of the same questions we used for the literacy study. So the first question was What piece of art do you remember? What is the most memorable piece of art? We talked about things like that and then described it. Then I asked the second question, Why do you think that is the most memorable piece of art to you? The third question was What are all the things you wondered about this piece of art work? And then the fourth one was Would you like to go to the Detroit Institute of Art again? Why or why not? The guide at the Detroit Institute of Art said, "I can not believe the questions these kids asked." The students wanted to know all these things, about these pieces of art, which I thought was a wonderful carry over from this literature study, especially the study of book illustrations. I thought they had really gone with a lot of insight and I'm sure that is a carry over because those are the kinds of questions that I have gotten in class--the whys. Why is this this way?

She described the connections she made between literature and writing, and social studies in Spring of 1992 at the International Reading Association convention. When teaching a unit on the homeless Teacher 11 and her students helped out at a soup kitchen. Before asking the students there, she read Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen, written and illustrated by Dyanne Di

Salvo-Ryan, "to help the students understand that the feelings they had about our forthcoming visit to the soup kitchen were not unusual." She reported that during class discussions the students compared their experiences with those depicted in this picture book. The children also wrote about their feelings and what they had learned. Josh wrote,

> I learned that some people needed false teeth, shelter, clothes, and food. One person stood out in my mind. She was a woman that had a few teeth missing. She was very nice. She wanted a person to talk to and I was that person. She asked me some questions. What she really needed was false teeth and clothes and food.
>
> I felt happy that I was doing something to help the homeless people. Before I didn't do anything to help, but now I went to the soup kitchen and I helped out a lot. I felt tingling inside of me. That made me surprised that I would be happy to help the homeless people.

During an integrated unit about World War II, some of the students in Teacher 11's class read several books of their choice. After they had the opportunity to discuss their selections in small groups, she asked them to respond to one of the books they read or to the theme of children as victims of war in some form of expressive or creative writing. Assuming the role of a child as a victim of war and using some of the experiences of the characters in the books she read, Karen wrote this free, expressive piece as a journal entry.

WHY?

I want to stay right here.
I like it here.
Why do we have to wear these stars on all our clothes
Why do they hurt us so much?
Why can't I go to school?
Why are they taking us away?
Why are we going to camp?
Oh Because I'm Jewish!

Megan wrote this poem about the train ride in The Endless Steppe: The Long Ride by Esther Hautzig.

THE LONG RIDE

It's been a long ride.
Many Jews are very ill.
Smell, overwhelming.
Families, separated.
I hope this ride ends real soon.

In response to The Upstairs Room, Matt and Latoya each assumed the role of Annie, the young protagonist in that autobiographical novel. Matt wrote,

I'M STUCK IN THIS ROOM

I'm stuck in this room
There is no way out of here.
I am so frightened.
I fear I will never get out of the endless war we have.

Latoya wrote,

SITTING DUCK

Soldiers are marching.
I am a sitting duck here.
I cry for myself
Cries, tears falling down.
Help! Help! They are here!
Bang! Bang!

Teachers' Assessment of Student Change

Success of a literature program is often based on the extent to which the students' enjoyment of literature is enhanced, but this kind of response (enjoyment) is an affective outcome that, to our knowledge, no written test can assess. This stance does not waive the need for some kind of evaluation or assessment of children's progress in learning about the affective responses to the aesthetic elements of literature. In fact, evaluation of children's affective responses as well as aesthetic understandings and appreciation of literature as an art should be deemed an ongoing process that is a part of each day's activities. In the main, children's progress in enjoying and learning about literature should be assessed by careful observations conducted

consistently in the full contexts of events pertaining to reading and responding to literature. Teachers should save whatever papers the students write in connection with their guided literature lessons. They also should make anecdotal records of their observations of students during these lessons.

The students' knowledge and understanding about specific aspects of the aesthetic elements of literature were assessed in this study by considering their answers to the questions which call for the various kinds of thinking, ranging from literal thinking to critical thinking. Diversity in judgments about literature did occur and were respected and encouraged, as is evidenced in the examples of students' responses quoted and described throughout this report. Our approach to assessment of critical aesthetic response is shaped by our knowledge of four major factors. One, literature is an art and thus it is vulnerable to personal, subjective, and affective as well as cognitive responses. Two, this kind of response is influenced by the amount and kinds of literature a person has read previously. Three, in most cases a person must experience instruction which elicits this kind of response. Four, a person must have numerous opportunities to respond to literature in this manner.

More specifically, the teachers who participated in this literature study were encouraged to assess students' progress through various observations, for example, the students' informal responses to teachers' questions and children's questions pertaining to their opinions about the literature they studied, students' spontaneous comments about their expressions of interest in reading literature, dramatizations of literature, and oral presentations. Teachers were asked to record their observations of whether or not the students sought out further literary experiences. Some reports of their observations are cited throughout this report. The teachers were also asked

to determine students' knowledge of literary elements and techniques used in the literary selections they studied through discussions and writing in response to literary selections. Many aspects of assessment are apparent in the teachers' statements made during conferences and interviews, examples of students' work, and transcripts of specific lessons which have been cited throughout the paper. Other examples which more obviously address student and teacher change are discussed below.

Several of the teachers reported witnessing some meaningful changes in students' response to literature. The following two teacher reports reflect student change in relation to the goal which focuses on helping students become more widely acquainted with all types of literature. In a paper presented at the national conference of the National Council of Teachers of English, Spring 1992, Teacher 5 spoke about the powerful influence this approach to literature has had on her grade-two students.

> My students seem to feel empowered as readers and writers. In fact they approach reading and writing with an "I can do" attitude. They choose trade books (real books!) that they are interested in reading. A designated grade level readability is of no concern to them. Their selections are based on such factors as the content or the topics that are addressed in the books, who wrote or illustrated the books, and the kind of books they are (e.g., animal stories, "chapter books," series books, poetry books, humorous stories.) My students love to read and to write. They actually think like authors and illustrators. It is not unusual for many of them to choose to write and illustrate their work in their "Choice Time."

During the end-of-the-end interview (Spring 1992) Teacher 14, who teaches special education, expressed her delight in the attitudinal changes she witnessed in her students.

> I think my students are more excited about books. I bought books for my classroom with the grant [a grant acquired through competition and awarded for the express purpose to buy quality literature for special education classrooms] I got, and I think I found a lot that were quality literature which my kids could read. Some of the wordless books that I selected are just a ball for kindergartners because they feel like they're reading a book just like the older kids. It was terrific having that extra money to buy a variety of books that were good literature but were also appropriate for my [special education]

> kids. It was wonderful, and made a big difference. I don't hear as many kids say "I can't read" as I used to. I think their interest is piqued by my reading aloud more frequently, and I spent some time just reading the new books when I got them.

One of the major goals of this study was to create an environment in which literature is valued and enjoyed for the aesthetic experience it offers. Progress toward the realization of this goal evident in the teachers' reports which are quoted below. Teacher 12 acknowledges the successes and failures he experienced during the 1991-1992 school year.

> The amount of change I saw depended on the student. For some of them it was okay. I would take Daniel to be the biggest success because I didn't see him as reading literature well [at the beginning of the year]. He had such poor understanding of what he was reading, no real depth to what he was imaging when he would read. He could answer literal questions because he would look long enough and he would find the answer. There was no expression of his feelings. He wasn't a good writer either. In fact, he was quite a low-level writer. Now he could become a lawyer. I mean now he can see everything that's written between the lines, and that's what he looks for. It just comes naturally to him [now]. His writing is very concise but very well done, a lot in a few lines. His thinking about the books we read has just developed tremendously. So he's a success. There are probably half [of the students] that are successes, and then there are the others who weren't. I don't know why it [this approach to literature] worked for some of them and not the rest.

At the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1991) Teacher 10 attested to seeing a change in her grade-four students.

> There are more children who are actually reading during our D.E.A.R. [Drop Everything And Read] time first thing in the afternoon. Other years I know some of the kids were going through the motions; they know they have to have a book out in front of them for a least 15 minutes. And now I see less of that. I see more kids who are actually involved in a book, and many of them are chapter books. There are still a few kids who are going up several times to get a book from the room collection, but for the most part kids have their own library books and are reading.

Included in aesthetic response is one's ability to develop and apply specific criteria and procedures for analyzing and evaluating the literature one reads. Teacher 2 made the following statement regarding her grade-one

students' progress toward understanding literary forms, techniques, and styles.

> At the beginning of the year when I finished reading a story to the children, I'd ask them if they liked the book. Of course they would hardly ever have a response of "no." Usually they all enjoyed the story, but they couldn't always tell me why. I think that's where I've seen the biggest change. They'd say they liked the pictures, but to say why they liked the pictures was hard for them. But now you sit down and you ask them those kinds of things, they would say, I like the pictures because I like the color or something like that. They're becoming more aware of what the illustrator is using. They might say they think the illustrator used water color. They're becoming aware of how the illustrators are showing the different feelings of the characters. We did a lot with feelings this year. What the illustrator did in those pictures to show that the character was feeling sad or happy and having them pick out some specific incidents in the stories that would show that. So I see a lot of growth. I share that with the kids and talk about it to them. At conferences I have shared it with the parents. There's not an awful lot on our report cards at this point that deals specifically with those kinds of things. I think there will be in the future. Many times I'll write an observation on the comment part of the report card that a child has shared a lot of good comments when we talked about the books we read. We don't have any formalized test really for literature.

Teacher 11 believes that some of her grade-five students progressed to a fairly advanced level in the development of critical aesthetic response to literature. Her comments below indicate that some of her students have developed personal literary tastes and preferences.

> Perhaps the most valuable connection one can make with literature is in the building of a firm foundation for a lifelong habit of reading. By studying literature as literature and by using it to expand children's knowledge base, this habit is developing and is apparent in the lives of many of these children. Kurt, who according to his mother, hardly opened a book for pleasure at home last year, not only reads constantly, but has learned how to discriminate in the selections he makes on the monthly paperback book orders. Evan, who also was not too interested in reading, not only reads every available moment in school and often times at home but also responds in great detail in writing assignments to what he has read. Megan, who has always been a reader, asks for more books about the subject of children as victims of war.
>
> Furthermore, when children beg you to continue to read a story aloud, when they choose to reread the books you have read to them, and when they ask your help in choosing a book especially for them, you realize that the foundations you have laid through activities that elicit critical aesthetic response literature have been invaluable.

Teacher self-assessment: Change. In the end-of-the-year interview in both 1991 and 1992, and during study seminars in late spring, we asked the individual teachers to discuss their progress and/or change in their teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature. In addition, the teachers were provided videotapes of some their lessons and asked to view the tapes prior to an individual conference with the university-based researchers. At this conference these three persons critiqued a lesson selected by the teacher. The statements below constitute self-evaluations that the teachers offered during these three kinds of meetings. During the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1991) Teacher 2 said,

> As a result of being involved in this study, I am more interested in getting children [in grade one] to be more critical thinkers, and getting them to talk about their feelings about books. I want their feelings and opinions not just what I would like them to get out of a selection. I also think the environment children are in is very important. They need to have access to a lot of literature, and the type of literature you're using [is also important]. And it's important to really enjoy reading to children.

At the same point in the study Teacher 5 stated,

> Now I think of literature as an art form. I am helping children [in grade two] realize how authors, as artists, go about the task of writing and what things they do to set moods in stories, to help [the readers] know the characters and the setting. I'm also much more aware of what illustrators do and what media they use, I guess because I'm very visual and I'm interested in art anyway. I also had a class this year (1990-1991) who practically considers themselves artists. They were extremely interested in illustrations too.

Teacher 8 believed she had made the following changes in her teaching after the first year of this study. She also identified her desire to become more competent in eliciting discussions which reveal more completely the children's stage of critical aesthetic response.

> I'm excited learning about teaching literature the way we are. I'm willing to learn, and I'm always saying [to the students] I'm learning this or that.
>
> Now I'm asking kids [in grade three] to explain what they are thinking. Why do you think that? Why do you feel that way? Asking the kids to explain what they think the author meant by that, to explain what the illustrator [did]. I have the kids talk about the

> illustrator and the author more specifically and the techniques that they've used to bring across the mood, or the events, or the plot, or whatever.
>
> As a result of this study, I read everyday. That has to happen, and now I realize how important that is.
>
> I want to learn how to do a better job of guiding students during [discussions]. I want to understand the Parsons's Stages more so I can see where they've been, where they are, and where they are going, and what I'll need to do to guide them to the next step. I'm not sure where they are in many cases after we have a discussion, so I need to figure out a way to really think about where my kids are individually and then how I am going to lead them. What do I need to do to get them beyond where they are. If we are looking at literature as an art form, I want to somehow help my students to do that for themselves as they are reading.

Teacher 7 discussed some of the new concepts she learned about structure and form which she would now teach every year. In addition she said she would continue to stress the affective aspect of critical aesthetic response.

> I think that we [Teacher 7 and her grade-three students] would study about the different genres and the elements of fiction because I think those help students truly get into the books and identify the message that the author is giving because they have a greater understanding of how the book came about.
>
> I think I emphasize how different books make you feel more than I have in the past, and how the language makes you feel. Not always just your understanding but why did the book make you feel that way. I would definitely read everyday.

Teacher 11 stated that, even though she felt she already had a fairly good knowledge of children's literature before this study began, she now believes she has "more of an understanding of why I think [a book] is quality literature which I didn't have before. [In the past], I just somehow had this sense about it."

During a spring study seminar, teachers were asked to identify any changes that they made in the way they teach literature. They engaged in the following discourse.

> Teacher 3: I'm much more aware of my talking. When I talk to the kids [in grade one], I'm even using the term "author." How is the author showing us this? Before we would say, How do you know this [focusing on the content]? Now I'm much more aware of pointing out what the author has done with the characters and just using that term.

Teacher 7: Before we talked basically about understanding the story and that was it. Whether the story was a lot about character or some other plot or something like that, but we, at least I just talked about the overall stuff.

Teacher 1: Before this study, I wasn't much interested in the author. Sometimes I read a story and I couldn't remember who the author was and now I'm really more aware of who the author is.

Teacher 10: I think another thing that we changed in our teaching is our way of dealing with being very specific and asking questions or talking about the kind of story [genre] the book is, the kind of writing it is, and using some facts to back that up.

At the end of the second year Teacher 1 saw some changes in the variety of literature she used in her kindergarten classroom.

I use a bit wider variety of genre now. As a kindergarten teacher I really stuck pretty close to modern realistic fiction that they could relate to their lives. I have expanded that quite a bit. I have done some animal fantasy with them. In the past I thought fantasy was for second or third grade because kindergartners are not sure what is real and what is not real. I didn't want to confuse the issue. But they seemed to have handled [fantasy] pretty well. They know if you put clothes on those animals and they talk like people that they are not real. They have really taken quite well to it and enjoy those kinds of stories. I haven't run into the problems I thought I might. I was afraid that kids weren't going to know what was real, but they seemed to be able to make that distinction.

Teacher 5 discussed some of the changes in her approach to eliciting children's personal responses to literature. She was pleased with her ability to individualize the teaching of reading and writing through literature.

I'm trying not to be so teacher-directed and telling kids [in grade two] what I think. I'm exposing them to lots and lots of good literature and asking the right questions to get them to think and respond. I kind of feel like I'm doing the job well when kids start making connections from things they read or heard last year [1990-991] to this year [1991-1992] and from things that we did early in the year to what's going on now. They're making connections both in authors' writing styles and styles of illustrations so I feel like the kids are becoming more aware [of literature as an art]. My involvement in the literature study these past two years has helped me to accommodate the different developmental and achievement levels that are evident and not so evident among my students when teaching reading and writing differences more aptly.

In the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1992) Teacher 12 compared his students with his previous year's class.

> Last year [1990-1991] we were focusing on the characteristics of good literature, different types of literature. This year we had kids that came in and they seemed to know that already and that was a big advantage. I was surprised how well they did know it. They recognized it. When asking them questions, they came up with that right away. So I focused on how the authors put forth their views or affected the views of the readers. Maybe that was because I was focusing on writing as well as critical aesthetic response to literature this year. I found it interesting that different students would get different views and they could all identify what the author had done. I often wondered if the author intended that or not. The students would get contrary views and they could support [each view] by something that was in that book that the author had done. I wouldn't have noticed because I would have my view and I could support it, and they could equally support their views. I was moved.

Problems and Concerns

Concerns Identified by Teacher Researchers

Distinguishing between reading instruction and the study of literature.

A number of teachers persistently expressed an uneasiness about how this approach to literature is or is not compatible with their past practice of teaching reading skills and content through literature. Teacher 8's statement made during a study seminar discussion in April 1991 is indicative of the kinds of statements voiced during the first year of this study.

> The teaching of literature is not necessarily the teaching of reading and I've wrestled with that all year long. What am I doing? What am I supposed to do? Can I sneak in a reading skill here? Literature is literature and you can read it for the beauty of it, for the experience of it, for the feelings of it, and for teaching reading. I think I'm close to understanding where I want to be, but I'm not there yet. I have to do both to have a complete reading program. I think this year I was trying to figure out how to do teaching of literature as an art form so much that the teaching of reading got lost in there, and yet they compliment each other. I have to help my kids develop reading skills so they can go on and appreciate the literature even more. I let the reading skills part go, probably more than I should have because I was trying to figure out how to do the teaching of literature as an art form.

The need for multiple copies of books. The following concern about not having multiple copies of books that the teachers wanted to use for teaching critical aesthetic response to literature is closely allied to their concern about teaching reading skills. The fact that most of the literary selections used for this approach were read aloud by teachers did not provide the opportunities for them to keep track of the progress the children were or were not making in reading. Prior to this study, teachers in the upper grades seldom read picture books to their students; however, they chose to read them aloud because they became more aware of picture books which were appropriate for their students. All of the teachers became mindful about children not being able to see details in the illustrations when they didn't have their own copies. The following conversation took place during a study seminar in April 1991:

> Teacher 10: What I found is when I read a book to the children and [each of them] doesn't have a copy to look at, it's pretty hard to look at the illustrations and it's hard to go back and revisit some of the passages. They can't do that on their own and so I find that is an extreme difficulty. The times that everybody's had their own copy, that has worked out.
>
> Teacher 16: That's what I've found in the library too.
>
> Pat C.: So the implication is that we have to identify books that we want multiple copies of. What you are saying is that in order to find out what the students' responses are to a selection we need to use multiple copies. What would you identify as the advantages of reading aloud to the students whether or not they have individual copies of the selection?
>
> Teacher 6: They could create their own pictures in their minds if they haven't seen a copy of the book. I would prefer to have the teacher read it and then revisit it with the multiple copies. I've done that and it works really well because they created the images, and then we went back with the multiple copies to look at them in more detail. One of the things I've found when they have the multiple copies to look at, they can see so much more in the illustrations.
>
> Pat C: When the students have their own copies, you can ask them to find passages that had descriptive detail that they thought helped them create images. Or they could look at the copies and write their readers' theater scripts.

Teacher 10: I also like some of my slower readers to be able to follow along when I'm reading for the exposure to the words and what they mean.

Teacher 7: Or even just the fluency. Reading aloud to the children helps the fluency.

Teacher 9: It helps increase their vocabulary, too.

Assessment. Another major concern was the lack of specific techniques and procedures that could be used for accountability and assessment. The following conversation occurred during a study seminar in Spring 1991.

Teacher 10: I don't know how you measure the answers to the kinds of questions we are asking because a lot of it can't be measured. Questions like, What are you feeling or thinking about when I read this book?

Pat C.: We are not measuring it. What we are trying somehow to accommodate is to encourage the children to express their feelings and their reactions to the reading that has been done. We have done a wonderful job in teaching the children about literature as literature: the cognitive aspects where they identify the characteristics of the genre, where they identify the elements of fiction and talk about how well these are developed. We have made wonderful progress, but we need to think about how to get more children to speak about their feelings or thoughts or reaction to a story. When your students engaged in group discussions, they have shared absolutely pithy things about their feelings and thoughts in response to the stories, but there are always some students who never get a chance to say something.

Scope and sequence. The teachers at Blaine School have expanded literature education extensively since the initiation of the Literacy Study two years ago and now realize the need to explore ways in which the scope and sequence of literature education can be more carefully and logically articulated within each grade level and throughout the elementary grades, from kindergarten through grade five. The university-based researchers concur with this expressed need. Within this focus, there is the need to determine how to merge the students' reading interests and needs with those specified in the state and district curricula. There is also the need to help the teachers to

develop a better understanding of how to select children's literature which appropriately supports and enriches each grade level curriculum yet respects and fosters the development of individualized, independent, and voluntary reading on the part of each student. The following is an abridgement of several discussions.

> Teacher 12: We [the grade-five teachers] don't want to be doing the same thing as the second, third, and fourth is doing and using the same materials. I have talked with other teachers about needing to develop a literature curriculum.
>
> Pat C: A scope and sequence for either grouping of primary, like kindergarten through grade two and grade three through five, rather than individual grades. Is it just selections or the concepts that you are concerned about?
>
> Teacher 7: Both. When you have a broad range of readers in your class you may want to have easier books to share with the lower level readers and a more difficult one with the better readers. Then when another teacher in a higher grade wants to do the same thing, she needs to know what the students have read in the lower grades.
>
> Pat C: Oh, but there are other books about the same topic or theme, and it is sometimes appropriate to have the students read the book again. For example, the grade-five students read Whipping Boy in a lower grade and Teacher 11 wanted to use it because it fit in beautifully with their unit on castles and the medieval period. So they reread it but they had a different focus. It didn't seem to create a problem. But we wouldn't want to do that all the time.
>
> Teacher 7: I can see your problem. A teacher could conceivably select a picture book and all the students are exposed to it. Maybe all three grades could have used that picture book. We really don't know if they have or not. So, many times over the years I've said, "I imagine a lot of you have heard this book but we're going to think about it differently today." The more exposure the kids have to books, the more that is likely to happen. I see it as a problem we should look into.
>
> Teacher 10: I don't see it as a major problem with the picture books, but I do see it as more of a problem with some chapter books and transitional novels.
>
> Teacher 9: I really feel each time children read picture books or even chapter books they bring something different to them.
>
> Teacher 5: That's right. If it's a good book, it is usually multidimensional. It should be revisited maybe, but with a different perspective, but only if it's a good book.

Problems and Concerns Identified by University-Based Researchers

Commitment. The Literature Study was the only Professional Development School (PDS) study in which teacher participation was required by the principal. When people are required to do something, it does not necessarily guarantee that they will wholeheartedly embrace the perspective underlying the study. Therefore, when the opportunities to participate in other studies appeared and these studies were of equal or greater interest to teachers, the anxiety level of some was raised. They were torn between committing themselves to the Literature Study, and/or the Math Study, and/or the Teacher Education Circle, and so on. As a result there were different levels of commitment among the participants of the study. Some teachers participated consistently at an intense level of commitment, while others fluctuated for various reasons, and still others participated minimally in all aspects of the study. There is no single indicator which would reveal the level of a person's commitment, but we did identify several indicators which collectively and interrelatedly provided an estimate of level of commitment. We identified the following observable indicators: change in teaching practice and in students' reading habits; growth in teacher knowledge about aspects of the study; the teacher's willingness to ask for help and/or suggestions for approaches to teaching literature, for selection of materials, for clarification of theory and practice; the teacher's participation in whole-group and/or small group discussion; teachers' statements made in interviews and conferences. Using these indicators we estimated the following level of commitment for the 12 teachers who participated in both years of this study as follows: High--41.7% (5 teachers), Medium--33.3% (4 teachers), and Low--25% (3 teachers). To motivate a higher level of commitment, we requested conferences with individuals and grade-level teams. In turn, some teachers and particular grade-level

teams requested meetings with us. Regardless of the extent of their commitment, all teachers provided many and varied opportunities for children to be exposed to a wealth of literature for the pleasure and enjoyment it offered as well as to accomplish diverse instructional goals.

Past and present relations with Michigan State University personnel. Blaine School has been associated for approximately 25 years with the College of Education at Michigan State University serving as a site for different aspects of teacher education, for example, field experiences, student teaching, research projects conducted by university personnel, and a center for one of the alternative teacher education programs. As a result of this relationship, Blaine piloted the Professional Development School Initiative in the 1989-1990 school year. Occasionally within the context of these varied aspects, tensions developed between the two groups of personnel. Historically some university personnel used Blaine students and faculty as the subjects for their research which had generally been designed without consulting the Blaine community. For example, during the 1989-1990 school year which was the first year of the PDS involvement with Blaine, two university professors each initiated projects with some of the Blaine faculty. Even though the Blaine faculty assumed that each of the studies was to be a long-term effort, the university professors left at the end of that school year without consulting with the teachers or explaining why they chose to work at other Professional Development Schools.

The Blaine teachers generally welcome suggestions for studying educational issues and practices. Whenever the administrative leaders of MSU PDS ask them to take on a new and additional study, the teachers tend to agree to investigate it. For the most part, some teachers agree to participate fully in a proposed study while others find themselves torn between their interest

in it and the reality of the time their commitments to other projects and other responsibilities require. Our experience with the teachers at Blaine School over the past two years has confirmed that they understand that the process of institutional and individual change takes time, hard work, strong commitment, and the capacity for risk taking. Consequently they must make some difficult decisions about their level of commitment to each project in which they decide to participate.

Reluctance to select new literary selections. Though the teachers were keenly interested in any and all new literary selections provided by the director of the study, they appeared to be reluctant to seek out new titles on their own. One reason might be that they did not feel knowledgeable enough to select quality literature on their own. A second factor might be that they were confident that the selections provided by the director of this study were quality literature, particularly since the titles she recommended proved successful. Third, the teachers did not have ready access to new books. Even though their school district has a review library which should be a resource for examining new titles, the chairperson of the district's book review committee restricts circulation of the review books until all members of the committee have considered them.

Library. Foundational to a literature-based curriculum, and in this case the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature, is the accessibility not only to quality literature but also to a large collection of literature. A functional library/media center makes the literature accessible to the teachers and students. Unfortunately the school library at Blaine Elementary School is characterized by a small, aging, and outdated collection of all kinds of literature, a lack of inspired and adequately trained professional staff, and limited access to the existing collection due to limited

presence of a professionally trained library staff. Teacher 2's statement reflects a concern voiced by all of the teachers sometime during the two years of this study, "After I've presented a book, and the children have had it in their hands, some of them will follow up by trying to get that book from the library. But frequently the book isn't there." Therefore, it is our position that a school library program, the library's holdings, and its physical characteristics are crucial factors in supporting and fostering children's learning in all areas of the curriculum, especially those identified in the Literature Study.

A greater sensitivity to the proper role of the school library/media center needs to be developed among the school library personnel and the teachers at Blaine Elementary School so that a quality and vital library/media program may be implemented. Substantive educational research, especially that done at the University of Chicago Library School, shows that children are more likely to develop the habit of reading and become lifelong readers when they have the benefit of quality literature and an active library/media center in the elementary school. It also demonstrates that other benefits gained from active utilization of a large library collection and library/media services include such things as appreciation of literature, acquisition of broadened outlooks, development of new reading interests, improvement of reading skills, and a gain in academic achievement. The faculty and administration at Blaine concur that the library/media center at Blaine must be improved in order to achieve these goals more fully, but there are very limited funds designated for the library both at the district level and at the individual school level.

Conclusions and Implications

As university-based researchers, we were delighted with the diverse ways the teachers implemented the critical aesthetic approach to teaching

literature. In the beginning of the study, each teacher or grade-level teams identified literature goals they wished to emphasize. Gradually, they broadened their focus to include the other goals of this study. Each teacher approached and achieved the stated goals to some degree in his or her own way. Several teachers used series books. Some teachers focused on the ways of teaching children how to make a distinction between different literary genre and others studied one genre in depth. In some teams, each member of a team read the same story but each teacher in that team did something different with that book. Everybody taught some aspect of critical aesthetic response to literature, but individual teachers and teams chose different kinds of literature and encouraged different aspects of response. In other words, the teachers truly thought for themselves and took advantage of their students' interests and their own special interest when teaching critical aesthetic response to literature.

The biggest challenge was to design questions which would elicit critical aesthetic response and also encourage the children to advance developmentally in this kind of response to literature. Nonetheless the participants of the study took on the challenge and developed two different but complementary sets of questions. The teachers successfully used these questions to foster critical aesthetic response to literature through discussion, oral composition like readers' theatre and dramatization, art activities, and writing. In addition, the teachers effectively adapted the questions for the maturity level and literary background of their students. Each of the three teachers quoted below address the importance of developing questions which elicit critical aesthetic response to literature. All of these statements were made in the end-of-the-year interview 1992.

> Teacher 3: Last year it was really hard to know what questions to ask our [grade-one] students, and what they would be able to answer.

> We needed to ask questions besides "Did you like this book?" Look how far we've come. We began with putting a check mark in a box. Check yes if you like the story and no if you didn't. Now we do so much more: What were you feeling when we read this story? Were there any parts of the story you could relate to? What does this story remind you of? What is exciting is hearing the kids answer "We heard a story in the library and this reminds me of this [something in or about the other book]." I found the Probst questions very helpful because they gave me a guideline to follow.
>
> Teacher 11: Since beginning this study in the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature, I have shifted my focus from the literal comprehension and interpretation level of reading literature to critical aesthetic response to literature. This shift was accomplished primarily through questioning techniques and by focusing on the aesthetics of literature read by individual students.... I have incorporated in my questions to the [grade-five] students, the cognitive aspects of response put forth by Michael Parsons (1989) and the affective aspects of response put forth by Robert Probst (1989). Slowly but surely the students are learning to respond critically aesthetically to literature.
>
> Teacher 14: I think that last year (1990-1991) I just started with questioning [to elicit critical aesthetic response], so one of my goals this year was to improve my questioning. I spent a little more time this year in planning and thinking about the kinds of questions I was going to ask. It's a little more difficult this year [because I have] kindergarten through fifth-grade students [in my Special Education classroom], as well as an autistic and noncommunicative child. My questions had to span a broader scope than last year. Rewriting the Probst questions helped, but a lot of them were things that we had already been working on. It gave me something to refer to when planning. I just kept them [the adapted Probst questions] in my plan book and then looked at them every once in a while to see if I was headed in the right direction or if there was something I was missing.

The students progressed in the development of critical aesthetic response to literature through the teachers' growth in their ability to pose appropriate questions. The teachers continue to use this approach to advance the development of students' critical aesthetic response.

During the second year of this study most of the teachers increased both the number of books read and the variety of types of literature. In addition some of the teachers reported a marked increase in the number of individual selections read by students. They were providing for individual tastes and

interests within a particular topic, acknowledging preferences for particular types of literature, providing for a range of achievement levels within a particular group of children, and providing for a range of depth and breadth of information about a particular topic as needed or wanted by individual readers.

The teachers grasped the significance of and made a concerted effort to achieve the major objective of this study which was to create an environment in which literature is valued and enjoyed. In order to accomplish this objective, the teachers offered the students activities which would elicit affective response. Specifically the activities were designed to foster the development of enjoyment, imaging, and association which made it easier and more pleasant for the reader to take an objective stance and engage in higher order cognitive thinking about literary forms, techniques, and styles of literature selections. All of the teachers, regardless of their level of commitment to other aspects of this study, implemented these affective facets of critical aesthetic response to literature. The extent to which children valued and enjoyed literature is not measurable. Nonetheless, the responses we observed such as their attention when listening to a story and their enthusiastic discussions about stories, suggest that the objective to create an environment in which literature is valued and enjoyed was achieved at least to some degree with each child. Critical aesthetic development consists of a very gradual acquisition of insights about the aesthetic aspects of a literary selection or about the pictures that illustrate the story. One must keep in mind that an individual's maturity level and background of literary experience determine the depth and breadth, and level of sophistication that an individual can develop in each aspect of critical aesthetic response to literature. One reaches the later stages in the development of critical aesthetic

response with an education in which literature as art is often encountered and in which one is expected to think about literature seriously. So, the teacher's task to nurture critical aesthetic response to literature is never done, nor is the individual's development in this kind of response ever completed.

The teachers were more aware of the indicators which show that the students enjoyed the books selected for reading aloud and for independent reading. Increasingly during informal meetings and conversations with the university-based researchers and with one another all of the teachers commented about their students' enjoyment of selections they read aloud or made available for independent reading. This demonstrated the teachers' delight when the students obviously responded enthusiastically to the books, it also showed the teachers' increased awareness of this aspect of critical aesthetic response to literature.

As the study progressed the size and the quality of the classroom library collections increased. The classroom libraries became a focal point, for example, they were more attractive, more space was allotted for them, and the teachers encouraged the children to select books from them for more varied purposes. Again, this suggests that the teachers were more interested in connecting and integrating literature with aspects of the curriculum and that they were encouraging individualized reading habits and interests.

Teacher 2's comment typifies the general tenor of the teachers' attitude toward many aspects of this project, especially their excitement about the opportunity to read new books and to introduce these books to the students in new and different ways. She said, "We've been exposed to so many wonderful books. The kids got so excited about them because they had not been exposed to them before. They were all brand new to them as well as to us. I get more

excited about the new books. It really makes a difference." The fact that the university-based researchers made it possible for the teachers and children to have easy access to numerous new books seems to have made it more conducive for the teachers to change their educational practices and even add new content to their teaching of literature than when they used literary selections they had been using in years past. This positive attitude accounted in large measure for the progress they made in teaching so many of the different aspects of critical aesthetic response to literature.

Although the teachers of Blaine School were known to use literature extensively as a tool for teaching content and skills in subject areas, their comments and questions at the beginning of the study during the study seminars, team meetings, and individual conferences clearly suggested that few of the teachers had much knowledge about literature as a subject, for example, characteristics of genres, elements of fiction, and characteristics of book illustrations. They seemed to be comfortable with learning about and teaching these cognitive aspects of critical aesthetic response to literature and they seemed to think that these concepts about literature were more concrete and easy to identify. Perhaps this would explain their willingness to teach about literary forms, techniques, and styles all of which constitute knowledge which was new to them and their students. Many of the lessons the university-based researchers were invited to observe pivoted around these concepts and were on the whole very successful. In fact, the researchers and teachers found that students' growth and development in these cognitive aspects of critical aesthetic response to literature could be observed and assessed.

When teachers realized that each child created different images when listening to or reading picture books and novels, they seemed to have a better understanding and appreciation for the concept of the development of

individual literary taste and preference. They put forth considerable effort to foster the development of this aspect of critical aesthetic response literature. It appears many of the students benefited from this effort as is evidenced by the increase in their rather opinionated comments about the individual titles they selected, the titles read aloud by the teacher, and the illustrations by specific illustrators. This is a fairly advanced stage of critical aesthetic response to literature; nonetheless, young children are able to develop this expression of individuality. Their limited knowledge of technical literary terms tends to prevent them from explaining precisely why they like one story or one kind of story over another or why they like one illustration or one kind of illustration over another. The inability to describe one's feelings, emotions and other affective responses to literature as art is explained further by Bennett Reimer (1992) in "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth in the Arts?".

> Feelings, or affects, are experiences at the level of internal awareness of subjectivities. Although we are aware that we are undergoing subjective events we are not able to express or describe them in words (they are ineffable) for a variety of reasons. First, words, by their nature are unsuitable to express the dynamically evanescent and fleeting character of feelings. Further, feelings are complex amalgams of a variety of felt qualities undergone simultaneously, and the mixtures of qualities are also transitory in that they shift among their combinations and interrelations from moment to moment. Language syntax is not constituted to represent this kaleidoscopic quality of feeling. And feelings are in constant motion in their intensity, each change of degree of intensity changing the nature and quality of what is being experienced. In depth as will there is a constant movement, as feelings are experienced as more or less significant or portentous from moment to moment. All such characteristics of feeling and their sum account for the gap between the richness and density of our inner subjective reality of felt awareness and the limited capacity of ordinary language to mediate or represent it. (p. 36)

All of the teachers tried to help the students formulate their own individual preferences for particular authors, illustrators and kinds of literature. Through the study and implementation of questioning techniques and through the

activities they chose, the teachers made a definite effort to help students learn to verbalize more precisely their reasons for their preferences. Depending on the level of maturity and background of literary experience, children at all grade levels made some progress toward achieving this objective.

During the second year of this study, more than half of the teachers increased the number of literary selections when they made connections or integrated literature and subject matter. Teacher 2's statement made during the end-of-the-year interview (Spring 1992) typifies what many of the teachers said.

> This year (1991-1992) we tried to expand using literature more in all areas of the curriculum. In the first year of this project we would just mainly read the literature as literature and just for the enjoyment and appreciation. Now when we are studying social studies or science [we ask] the kids... first to approach a book that way [literature as art] and then [we] try to relate it to the topic.... I've had a lot of extra literature in the classroom on display related to the curriculum that we're trying to develop. It's real interesting to me how much they go to that when it's their time to pick books.

It is very important to remember that teachers should first allow for critical aesthetic response to literature, especially the affective response, before focusing the students' attention on the content or the subject matter connections. This approach takes advantage of the potential values that critical aesthetic response to literature offers as well as the potential values that arise by connecting and integrating literature with subject matter. The teachers became and remained sensitive to the belief that at no time should the focus on the critical aesthetic response to literature be carried out to the point that it inhibits children's enthusiasm and joy for literature. At no point should children's response to literature be manipulated or imposed on them.

In light of the concerns about the library that were discussed previously in this report, an ad hoc library committee was formed at the beginning of the school year. This committee consisted of nine persons: the building principal, the professional librarian, the reading specialist, a co-teacher, the two university-based researchers coordinating this study, the teacher coordinator of this study, a teacher who volunteered to be a part of this committee because she is especially interested in improving the library program, and a graduate assistant appointed by the Partnership to represent the community-at-large; occasionally the Director of Instructional Media and Library Services of the Lansing School District attended these committee meetings. The Library Committee met at least two times each month to study aspects of the library/media center reflected in the goals and objectives of this study and submitted recommendations to the principal, the library staff, and the participants of the Literature Study as they were needed. Some of the members of the Library Committee visited other school library/media centers which were recommended because their programs, book collections, staff, furniture, equipment, and/or physical characteristics which reflected or suggested the qualities we needed to consider in order to improve the library/media center at Blaine School.

The changes that resulted from this focus on revitalizing the library/media center were really quite dramatic. The library program was modified so it would be more supportive of all aspects focused on in the Literature Study. The book collection was slightly enlarged and updated with quality literature selections purchased with funds raised by the teachers through book sales, and grants given by the Michigan Partnership for a New Education. Two persons were added to the library staff: the reading specialist who was already assigned to the school two-and-a-half days each week worked two of those days

in the library/media center and a co-teacher worked in it one day per week. The number of days the children had access to the collection was increased from two days each week to five because of the increase in library staff. Plans have been made to move the library (around January 1993) to a room about three times the size of the original room. A number of parents have participated in the development of some of the short- and long-term plans to make the Blaine School library/media vital source for learning.

Many aspects of assessment are apparent in the teachers' statements made during conferences and interviews, examples of students' work, and transcripts of specific lessons which have been cited throughout the paper. Assessment of children's progress in learning how to respond critically aesthetically to literature was based on careful observations conducted consistently in the full contexts of events pertaining to reading and responding to literature. Teachers saved papers the students wrote in connection with their guided literature lessons. They made anecdotal records of their observations of the students during these lessons. The students' knowledge and understanding about specific aspects of the aesthetic elements of literature were assessed by considering their answers to the questions which call for the various kinds of thinking, ranging from the literal thinking to critical thinking. Diversity in judgments about literature did occur and teachers learned to respect and encourage it, as is evidenced in the examples of students' responses quoted and described throughout this report.

It has become quite evident that elementary school students, even those in kindergarten and first grade, are quite capable of learning how to respond critically aesthetically to literature. At whatever age or grade level, there seems to be some carryover in children's ability to evaluate a literary selection in one genre to a literary selection in another genre when the elements

of fiction are used as the basis for evaluating the selections. There seems to be little or no carryover, however, in children's ability to evaluate a literary selection in one genre to a literary selection in another genre when the characteristics of the genre are used as the basis for evaluating the selections. In fact, direct instruction about the structure or elements of a story, the characteristics of each literary genre, or the structure or elements of the illustrations has a place in teaching critical aesthetic response to literature in the elementary grades. Furthermore, the focus on evaluating how some of these aspects of literature are developed in a story rightfully belongs in an elementary school literature program. But none of this should precede or restrict the reading of a selection for the kind of literary experience or response each child is capable of and inclined to make on his/her own (Cianciolo, 1988).

Analysis of data indicates that teachers experienced growth in their knowledge about literature and about the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature. This increased knowledge was evident from the data recorded in the tables which denote (1) the approaches to literature, (2) the varied types of literature used, (3) the number of books used each year, and 4) the varied uses of literature. Changes were also apparent when one analyzed the complete set of any individual teacher's literature lessons which were videotaped over the two years. It should be noted that teachers' attention to questioning, which continued in earnest throughout both years of this study, proved to be one of the most significant factors in improving the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature. The teachers' improvement in their ability to pose questions which promoted the development of students' critical aesthetic response to literature was substantial. Throughout the course of this study all of the participants

examined the nature of critical aesthetic response to literature and explored ways to implement its concepts in the classroom. As a result of this ongoing study, the teachers learned to recognize, appreciate, and honor the value and inevitability of both cognitive and affective thinking.

One of the factors which might have influenced the positive results of this study is the consistent availability of the university-based researchers for observations, conferences following observations, consultation for planning, and general discourse about the teaching and learning of critical aesthetic response to literature. This assertion is supported in the statement made by Teacher 3 during the end-of-the-year interview in 1992.

> I think when you are teaching, you don't have time to do a lot of new things without the help or the assistance of someone. That has been a great asset in this project. It has been wonderful to know that there is someone to watch you do these things in a classroom, but also as a resource to help me.

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